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ABSTRACT

A DIALOGICAL ENCOUNTER BETWEEN YOUNG
BLACK MEN AND THE POLICE IN DOUGHERTY
COUNTY: TOWARDS A MORE EFFECTIVE
COMMUNITY TRUST

by

Joshua Nelson

Adviser: Keith Burton

ABSTRACT OF GRADUATE STUDENT RESEARCH

Project Document

Andrews University

Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary

Title: A DIALOGICAL ENCOUNTER BETWEEN YOUNG BLACK MEN AND
THE POLICE IN DOUGHERTY COUNTY: TOWARDS A MORE EFFECTIVE
COMMUNITY TRUST

Name of researcher: Joshua C. Nelson

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Date completed: March 2019

Problem

Disproportionate police shootings of unarmed Black men have been a controversial topic of discussion in recent years. While Black men are 6% of the United States population, they make up almost half of the fatal police shootings each year. These figures indicate that policing tactics are depriving certain citizens of their right to live in peaceful societies where everyone experiences justice.

Method

The focus of this study was to develop, test and employ a training intervention model that facilitated a community of trust between law enforcement officers and Black American youth. This was done through the development of an intervention manual that

focused on facilitating restorative justice and initiating community policing tactics with participants. This project brought 24 young Black men and 14 police officers together for a three-week, four-part intervention. A pre- and post-survey was administered to the participants to measure significant changes in perception.

Results

The data revealed that the young Black men did show significant changes in perceptions of trust towards police. The police mostly shared positive initial and final perceptions of the young men. Thus, the police officers', pre- and post-data, did not show significant changes in perception towards the youth. However, their written and verbal comments indicated increased concern for the young men and enthusiasm for implementing continued community policing.

Conclusions

Perhaps if a group of police officers who initially admitted to having negative perceptions towards young Black males participated in this project, more significant changes would have been revealed in their perceptions post-survey. More research could have been done in this area. Implementing the intervention for a longer period of time would have rendered even better results.

Andrews University
Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary

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BLACK MEN AND THE POLICE IN DOUGHERTY
COUNTY: TOWARDS A MORE EFFECTIVE
COMMUNITY TRUST

A Project Document
Presented in Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Doctor of Ministry

by
Joshua Nelson
March 2019

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF FIGURES	vi
LIST OF TABLES	vi
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS	vii
Chapters	
1. INTRODUCTION.....	1
Description of The Ministry Context	1
Statement of The Problem	4
Statement of The Task.....	4
Delimitations	5
Description of The Project Process	6
Theological Reflection	6
Literature Review	7
Development of The Intervention	8
Structure of The Intervention	9
Definition of Terms	9
2. THEOLOGICAL REFLECTION.....	11
Adventist Imperative for Restorative Justice	12
Restorative Justice as God’s Biblical Solution.....	18
Restorative Justice in the Joseph Narrative	22
Restorative Justice in the Israelite Society	26
Restorative Justice in Classical Prophets	29
Restorative Justice in Christ’s Healing Two Blind Men	30
Restorative Justice and Jesus.....	32
Restorative Justice as a Model for Modern Justice Reform	34
Conclusion	37
3. LITERATURE REVIEW	39
History of Black Americans and Law Enforcement.....	40
Current Climate Between Black America And Law Enforcement	45
Solutions to the Problem of Police Brutality Against Black Males	53
Conclusion	63

4. CONTEXT FOR MANUAL DEVELOPMENT	64
Profile of the Project Context	66
Development of the Intervention	67
F.I.T. Intervention Manual Development.....	69
“Faith” Section I.....	71
“Integrity” Section II.....	73
“Training” Section III.....	74
“Conclusion” Section IV	76
Description of the Intervention.....	77
Context and Procedures	77
Timeframe	78
Evaluation Instrument and Data Collection	79
Recruiting Participants	80
Youth Recruitment	80
Police Recruitment	81
Incentives.....	81
Content	82
Conclusion	83
5. IMPLEMENTATION	85
Initial Communication and Setup.....	85
Interviews	87
Intervention Narrative	89
Session I: Faith	90
Session II: Integrity	95
Session III: Training.....	99
Session IV: Conclusion	102
Conclusion	104
6. PROJECT EVALUATION AND LEARNINGS	106
Summary of the Project	106
Description of the Evaluation Method	107
Data Interpretation.....	107
Conclusions Drawn From the Data	111
Outcomes of the Intervention	113
Final Conclusion.....	115
Recommendations	115
A Final Word.....	116

APPENDIX

A. LETTERS	117
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Request Note for Teachers	117
Request Note for Police Officers.....	118
Copy of Email From Dr. John Klofas, the Director of Center for Public Safety Initiatives	119
South Georgia Regional Achievement Center Administration Approval.....	120
Dougherty High School Administration Approval	121
B. QUESTIONNAIRES.....	122
C. FAITH INTEGRITY AND TRAINING INTERVENTION MANUAL	132
REFERENCE LIST	154
VITA	167

LIST OF FIGURES

1. A table comparing traditional policing, community policing, and victim-centered policing	59
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LIST OF TABLES

1. Intervention Time Schedule	104
2. I Trust the Police.....	108
3. Most Police Officers try to Understand What we are Going Through	109
4. Young Black men and Police can Work Together.....	110
5. In general, Albany Police Officers Trust Young Black Men.	111
6. Percentage of Young Black Men Circling the Word “Fair” to Describe Local Police	112
7. Young Black men in Albany Trust the Police	113

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Police misconduct in America's Black community has garnered national attention in recent years. The media has put a spotlight on countless stories regarding this pervading issue, as well as how the Black community perceives police. In particular, there has been much literature, public forums, and discussions centered on how young Black men are being treated by police and how young Black men behave with police. This project addressed some of these issues.

In this chapter, we take a brief look at the ministry context and the specific problem the project addressed. The task and project process are explained and important terms defined.

Description of the Ministry Context

The project was implemented in the Civil Rights historical city of Albany, Georgia in the Dougherty County, with a population of around 100,000. The county is 22.3% White, 72.8% Black, 2.5 % Hispanic, and 1% Asian. The estimated median household income is \$34,565, which is \$18,994 less than the state average. The city lists 39.1 % of its residents as falling under the poverty line. The education level shows that only 20.1% have a bachelor's degree or higher.

The education level is mostly grouped around high school and vocational college graduates. Albany is the home of Albany Technical College and Albany State University, an Historically Black College and University (HBCU). The former Darton State College was recently merged with Albany State University, which has been a controversial subject, as Albany State has a majority Black enrollment and Darton had a majority White enrollment.

The unemployment rate is 5.3%, which is slightly higher than the national average of 4.1%. The most common occupations include sales related, production, and building and grounds cleaning and maintenance occupations. Manufacturing and retail are the most common industries.

The crime index averages 552.1, which is significantly higher than the 279.3 U.S. average. In all major areas including murder, assault, and rape, Albany experiences crime at a higher rate per capita. The law enforcement employment averages 2.18 per 1,000 residents, which is lower than the state average.

The average age in Albany is 33.1, which has increased over the years showing that residents are getting older. The number of people living in Albany has decreased around 4% over the past five years. This has occurred as the national population has increased by 11%. Albany made number 7 on the top 10 worst places to live based on crime, unemployment, and housing. Alongside the city's challenges economically, there are vast communication, cooperation, and political competition issues that hinder the city's progress.

The Emanuel Seventh-day Adventist Church is located on the East side of Albany in the midst of various neighborhoods. The church is strategically located on the side of

town with a reputation of heavy crime and poverty. Aside from the crime, in some ways the church is a microcosm of the city. While the church is made up of mostly retired professionals, they share in some of the organizational and community challenges of the city.

Through conversations, one can notice a tone of negativity that covers the county. The poor statistics, negative press, and outside opinions appear to have depleted the morale of many residents. Many residents exhibit surprise and almost distaste towards those who move in from out of town. They wonder why anyone would want to move to their city. The church shares in this low morale and seems to expect there will be no membership growth. Because of this, the church ministries, activities, and worship seem to have lost their urgency and energy.

Most members feel that the outside community views their church in a negative light. Despite some great work done in the past, the church currently does not contribute in a large way to the well-being of its community. The church consists of an academy and a daycare, which both have declining enrollment. The building is in desperate need of renovation and repair. The main sanctuary has no restrooms, and members must walk to the school building for these facilities. The church has been known to have much disagreements, arguments, and drama.

The local membership is mostly comprised of senior citizens with a handful of middle-age adults, young adults, and children. There is much work to be accomplished in reviving the morale and culture of the church, while solidifying sustainable ministry presence in the community.

Statement of the Problem

According to the 2010 United States Census, in Georgia, Blacks make up 31.4% of the general population, but 61.6% of the incarcerated population. Data showed that Blacks are routinely arrested in greater numbers for petty crimes and receive harsher sentences (Walker, 2017, p. 790). In Dougherty County, the Black population is much higher compared to the state percentages, with 72.8% Black and 22.3% White.

Inmates are transferred out of the county and into other state prisons that contribute to the disproportionate numbers of Black people incarcerated in Georgia. These factors and other reports of police misconduct and profiling have generated a general distrust for local officers by Blacks and other communities of color.

Recent reports showed that the key problems lie in the lack of education in black communities on how to interact with police officers, inadequate community policing initiatives, and an apparent need for reform in the U.S. justice system.

The Emanuel Seventh-day Adventist Church sits in the heart of southwest Georgia, in a racially divided southern community. Emanuel has no ministry addressing the documented national phenomenon of unusually high rates of racially motivated arrests and misconduct. Social issues, in the late 1800s, historically have been addressed by Seventh-day Adventists; the church needs to again lead out front on social justice.

Statement of the Task

The task of this project was to develop and implement a model within the church that encourages healthy relationship development between law enforcement officers and Black youth, while educating and advocating for those whose rights are violated. In so

doing, this model empowered Black youth to exercise their civil rights, taught them how to interact with police, and helped them understand their own cultural history.

The church focused on creating community policing opportunities for local police, who needed to be engaged in this project process. The project was evaluated by conducting a survey prior to, and after the implementation of this model.

Delimitations

The project was limited to research specific within the North Carolina, South Carolina, and Georgia regions. This region contains the only three states where my employers assign pastors to churches. The specific implementation of this project took place at the Dougherty Comprehensive High School and the Southwest Georgia Achievement Center High School in Albany, GA.

The study focused primarily on the disproportionate arrests and police misconduct statistics within the African American community of persons between the ages of 13 and 18. This age was selected as it is a formative age where perceptions are reinforced and independence increased. Also, these ages encompass the high school demographic. Working with school children proved to be an ideal way to ensure consistency in the program. The intervention was worked into a class period during the school day.

These particular schools and students were chosen because the students most reflected the Emanuel Church community. These students also reflected the at-risk demographic for frequent interactions with the police in this county.

Description of the Project Process

In this section, the process by which the project developed has been described. The theological reflection through biblical understanding and through the review of the literature informed the project description.

Theological Reflection

The theological reflection focused on understanding biblical restorative justice (a biblical interpretation of social justice). This brand of justice helps us discover solutions when addressing the disproportionate ill-treatment of Black young men by police and the subsequent generalized disfavor shown towards police officers. Their broken trust and strained relationship have been in need of reconciliation and restoration. The story of Joseph and his unjust enslavement and incarceration uncovered these key issues of restorative justice. In this biblical narrative, the themes of privilege and power, and reconciliation and restoration have been discussed. These themes have been linked to the problem and have explored how a solution can form from this theology.

The significance of social and restorative justice in relation to this project and proposed intervention can be better understood in this section. Six major teachings of the Seventh-day Adventist Church have been analyzed in light of restorative justice. These doctrines include: the three angel's messages, Sabbath, second coming, investigative judgment, the health message, and salvation. In the doctrine regarding the investigative judgment, the issues of God's judicial system have been compared to America's system of law enforcement in this paper.

The history of justice through the Bible in reference to God and the covenant codes has been explored. In a practical way, the idea of restorative justice has been

applied to America's system of justice and proposals for reform. Here, significant themes about restorative justice were discussed.

Literature Review

The literature review focused on three main categories: (a) historical review of Blacks' relationship with law enforcement in America, (b) current climate between Black America and law enforcement, and (c) solutions to the problem of police brutality against Black males.

The history of policing in America showed the deep systemic racial issues that surrounds the construct of law enforcement. This history has led to horrific pain and punishment for Black people. The mistrust between young Black men and police officers developed over many years of trauma. This section gave documented accounts of this history and showed a link to the policing practices of today.

The current way in which policing is done today in the U.S. was analyzed and discussed. The current issues of police brutality and misconduct were explored. It was discovered how disproportionate the problem is for Black people versus their white counterparts. Many of the racial disparities and obstacles were discussed.

The chapter concluded with a discussion of the social and legal solutions for the problem. The various reports that have been conducted to explore and combat the issue of policing were reported. These solutions and those that relate closely to restorative justice were explored. The idea of victim-centered policing and other types of community policing highlighted structural changes that could be made to police departments. Also discussed were some of the recent legislation written to curb violent policing and reverse mass incarceration.

Development of the Intervention

Project Implementation focused on conducting a four-session intervention with law enforcement officers and young Black men. The following steps were implemented:

1. Create a manual to be used in the intervention that contains the major areas of solution reported by the literature,
2. Adopt researched surveys for evaluation to measure pre and post perception changes,
3. Recruit participants for the intervention,
4. Conduct the intervention,
5. Analyze and report the data.

There are a number of ways to develop, implement, and evaluate the initiative to solve the problem:

1. Conduct the model within local schools with existing mentoring programs, and enlist the help of law enforcement agencies,
2. Gather local demographics and educate the church and community concerning the problem,
3. Use current church community ministries as a launching pad for this project model. *The Lunch Box* community program is a perfect ministry that can incorporate this project model among the children and teenagers who attend,
4. Interact and collaborate with law enforcement to develop and implement activities for their involvement with the young adults,

5. Implement the ministry model within the various groups through an extended period of time,
6. Evaluate through a written survey and behavioral observation changes,
7. Introduce this ministry model for the formation of a social/restorative justice department within the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

Structure of the Intervention

The intervention used a manual, developed from the theological reflection and literature review, that sought to create a community of trust and change perceptions of police and young Black men participants. The manual was titled *Faith Integrity and Training Intervention Manual*, or *F.I.T. Intervention Manual*. It consisted of three main sections entitled “Faith,” “Integrity,” and “Training.” Each section addressed its assigned titled characteristic and sought to instill these ideals into the considerations of the participants.

Definition of Terms

There are terms used in this project that may need clarification. To assist the reader in correctly understanding the content, those terms have been listed and annotated.

Criminal Justice is concerned with the laws that are broken and those who did the crime. It is focused on connecting the offender with the prescribed punishment for the proper amount of time (Zehr, 2015, p. 21).

Police brutality/misconduct is any unnecessary verbal or physical assault, which can be deemed as assault. This assault also includes physiological intimidation (Geller & Toch, 1996; Chaney & Robertson, 2013).

Justice includes the appropriate distribution of benefits, proper use of power, ensures equity, and honors the rights of people (Marshall, 2015, pp. 6, 7).

Restorative Justice is a form of social justice that expands the list of those effected by the case beyond just the state and the offender to include the victim and the community. Its primary concern is with those who have been harmed and how their needs can be met. It also seeks ways to reconcile the offending party with the victimized (Zehr, 2015, p. 22).

Social Justice is justice given in the society that ensures the vulnerable have access to basic and crucial human needs that others may take for granted (Miller, 2015, p. 154).

Victims refer to those who have been harmed by an offender (Zehr, 2015, p. 22).

CHAPTER 2

THEOLOGICAL REFLECTION

“Learn to do good; Seek justice, reprove the ruthless, defend the orphan, plead for the widow” (Isa 1:17, *New American Standard Bible*). “But let justice roll on like a river, righteousness like a never-failing stream!” (Amos 5:24). “If someone says, ‘I love God,’ and hates his brother, he is a liar” (1 John 4:20). God has his own brand of justice that leads to reconciliation and restoration of the society. This theme of justice in the context of restoration flows through the Bible (Fretheim, 2008). The Bible has over 1,000 references to justice, one of its most prevalent themes (Marshall, 2015).

The themes of restoration, rehabilitation, and relationship are the intended results of restorative justice. The story of Joseph and Jesus can reveal God’s desire for justice. The Joseph narrative showed how God seeks to restore relationships and uses privilege to bring justice. The Israelite traditions and biblical themes display ways in which justice is prioritized. The stories of Jesus healing show the rehabilitation and restoration aspects of restorative justice.

Adventist Imperative for Restorative Justice

In secular society, “justice” does not take God into account. The laws of the land reflect justice from a human standpoint. Because God is the source of justice, this gives his followers the right to “condemn injustice wherever they find it” (Marshall, 2015, p. 23). God holds society to a high standard when asking, “How long will you judge unjustly and show partiality to the wicked? Give justice to the weak and the orphan; maintain the right of the lowly and the destitute. Rescue the weak and the needy; deliver them from the hand of the wicked” (Ps 82:1-4).

Adventist church founder Ellen White (1891) appeared to be in harmony with the admonition of the Bible to condemn injustice because she expressed her opinion against the popular practice of her day to look down upon the poor and minorities. She declared her allegiance to Christ to sympathize with the poor and discarded. There is space to speak up for the mistreated persons and to defend the victim’s cause. There is an Adventist precedent to do this for the “colored people” during the time of Ellen G. White. White (1899), indicated our duty for work to be done among Black people, especially for those living in the South. She even spoke out in protest of the evils that were being done to Black people (White, 1897). This protest should influence how we decide to vote for candidates with corrupt agendas (White, 1899). Even in our missionary endeavors, she encouraged Christians to look to their local community to find those in need. “We shall find His footprints beside the sickbed, in the hovels of poverty, in the crowded alleys of the great city, and in every place where there are human hearts in need of consolation. In doing as Jesus did when on earth, we shall walk in His steps” (White, 1898).

Timothy Keller (2010) speaks to the imperative of all Christian believers to seek justice in the world. He states that most people know that Christ brings grace and forgiveness, but fewer people know a true experience of the grace and forgiveness leads the Christian to seek justice in the world. He reminds the Christian not to wonder whether social justice should be done but rather discover how best to ensure justice flows in all facets of life. Likewise, Adventist doctrine has revealed an imperative for a response to the social issues of our day. Taking six major teachings of our church—the three angels’ messages, Sabbath, second coming, investigative judgment, the health message, and salvation—we discover strong social and restorative justice implications.

First, the three angels’ messages found in Revelation 14:6-13 uncover God’s last day message of hope to a world locked in despair. The first angel flies in between heaven and earth with a message for every nation, tribe, language, and people. This message is a cross- cultural message about the salvation of every people group. This is a message that frees every person from the restraints of sin, oppression, and specifically injustice. Justice must be upheld because this first angel says “judgment has come” (Rev 14:7), which in a judicial sense implies that God’s justice must also ensue. This theme of justice in connection with judgment is supported throughout the Bible (Gen 18:19; 2 Sam 8:15; Job 8:3; Ps 89:14). God’s justice and righteousness is in close connection to His perfect judgment (Ps 103:6). The angel concludes his first message with a bold call to worship this God who, with His creative power, can restore justice in the society.

With the second angel, more hope is given as the political and religious systems of oppression have crumbled. Revelation 13 and 18 reveal even deeper implications of the fall of Babylon as “merchants of the earth will weep and mourn” over the crumbling

of capitalism and economic oppression (Rev 18: 11). This message is being presented to John the Revelator at a time when Christians are being persecuted, marginalized, and oppressed. Although the text does not explicitly speak of oppression, as Robert Royalty (2015) argues, for Black people who are experiencing the effects of capitalism, there is a unique ability to see social and restorative justice in the text.

By the third angel's message, we discover that assimilation is not the answer and separation from evil is most desired. The call is for endurance, renewed faithfulness to the testimony of Jesus, and obedience to God's commandments. Burton (2016), reveals that by focusing on "the testimony of Jesus" we are drawn to "how Jesus lived." This is a Jesus who makes commands for our own wellbeing and lives a life of justice for the oppressed. Thus, faithfulness to Jesus means treating the oppressed with love and setting the captive free.

The concept of restorative justice can be demonstrated by the Sabbath day which, according to Isaiah 58 is centered around restoration and the cessation from unjust behavior (Isa 58:3,12,13). In the Seventh-day Adventist community, the seventh day of the week, the Bible Sabbath, is imperative to informing the lifestyle of the individual. On the Sabbath, God rested from His perfect creation and commands his people post-sin to remember His creative correctness.

On the Sabbath day, where no currency is exchanged, God levels the economic status of the society. No one was to buy or sell. The day represented a rest from the worldly pleasure of injustice. Many Adventists have misinterpreted the phrase "not doing your own ways, nor finding your own pleasure, nor speaking your own words" found in Isaiah 58:13,14 incorrectly. A full reading of the chapter reveals exactly how "pleasure"

is defined, especially in verse 3, “in fact, in the day of your fast you find pleasure, and exploit all your laborers.” The pleasure was in relation to exploitation and mistreatment of workers.

The Sabbath, however, was to be a day where no pleasure should be taken in doing injustice. It ensured that no labor would be done and no purchases made, as to allow every man to stand economically equal. The Sabbath pointed to the future second advent of Christ’s return to end all pain and suffering. In this way, the Adventist doctrine of Sabbath and the second coming, which are the roots of the denomination’s name, refer humanity to the ultimate desired outcomes for restorative justice—the *shalom* of all peoples and nations, the entrance of the kingdom of God upon Christ’s second coming. Thus, each Sabbath we foreshadow the end of sin, oppression, and injustice. The Sabbath is a taste of God’s kingdom that the three angel’s message seeks to guide us toward.

The second coming doctrine is about our present hope for the now but not yet realization of God’s kingdom. Paul reminds us that our citizenship is already in heaven (Phil 3:20), thus Christians have a responsibility to think and act as residents. Also, John the Revelator gives a picture of the seventh angel sounding a trumpet during the time of the end saying, “the kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ, and he will reign for ever and ever” (Rev 11:15). In the end, a great reversal takes place where God takes over the world as His kingdom and begins to enact justice by passing judgment.

As a way to promote God’s coming, we must focus not only on the manner of His coming, but the manner of living after His coming. Jesus preached that the kingdom of God has come and He demonstrated the meaning of these words by caring for the least,

last, and lost of the society (Matt 4:17; Mark 1:15). He demonstrated this even more clearly when He commanded the disciples to preach the kingdom of heaven and connected this to their need to also heal the sick, lepers, raise the dead, and cast out demons (Matt 10:5-9). They were to freely give as they had received.

The investigative judgment is initiated with the prophecy in Daniel 8:14, “It will take 2,300 evenings and mornings; then the Temple will be made right again” (New International Version). The word *tsadaq* means “to be just, be righteous” and carries deep connotations. This prophecy speaks to Christ’s inauguration as judge and king which prophetically ushers in the antitypical day of atonement, and thus justice is come. Adventists have long preached that the investigation has begun and will conclude with the saints observing the records for 1,000 years in heaven.

Revelation explains how all humanity will stand in the place and see the records unveiled to reveal the justice through the ages (Rev 20:12). Before punishments are given, God’s judicial system takes time for due process and the investigation of the heavenly records. This can speak directly to those who have been denied due process on this earth. Those who have been mistreated by law enforcement, gunned down, or given faulty sentences will have their case reviewed in heaven.

The doctrine of health reveals God’s concern with the human quality of life. This health message explains how God wants His creatures to treat the bodies He purchased with His own blood on the cross (1 Cor 6:20). The bible teaches how to remain physically, emotionally, and spiritually healthy by controlling what enters your body. This doctrine refutes any ideas that we should simply wait for the second coming to solve our physical and social problems.

Preaching such a message calls for us to follow God's health principles to alleviate problems of sin, depression, behavioral problems, medical concerns, etc., that are all linked directly to how we treat our bodies. This is God's universal healthcare and it speaks to the status and wellbeing of the individual here on earth. When this health message is taught as restorative justice in the community, the society's unjust impediments to health are addressed. For example, the teaching of the health message informs the community of God's ideal diet, while challenging local markets to provide healthy options.

Seventh-day Adventists see the gospel as God's plan to rid the world of sin through resolving the great controversy of good versus evil. Thus salvation, through the gospel, is preached in society to address the imperfections, oppressions, and inequity that sin in this controversy has caused. In the story of Job, we see best how unfair sin is to God's people, but Jesus came as our justice champion to restore the world to its original way. As Burton (2016) brings out, some still believe that "we have been saved in order that we may save God's reputation" (p. 4), but instead the Bible teaches salvation as "liberation from a kingdom of sin and selfishness so that redeemed citizens can participate in a renewed Kingdom of righteousness and justice" (p. 4).

The very essence of the gospel is that we can be released from the chains of the devil and reconnected to God. This becomes relevant to society as we see salvation as a community gift instead of an individual one. The gospel is the Savior riding as our champion to save us from the oppression of the world. In the book *Welfare Ministry*, it states,

The divine commission needs no reform. Christ's way of presenting truth cannot be improved upon. The Savior sympathized with the weary, the heavy laden, and oppressed. He fed the hungry and healed the sick. Constantly He went about doing good. By the good He accomplished, by His loving words and kindly deeds, He interpreted the gospel to men (White, 1914, p. 56).

There is a biblical imperative for Adventists to address the injustice in our society. The problem is when our church, lawmakers, and society fail to repair a system of destructive justice that incarcerates and mistreats Blacks at a higher disproportionate rate than their White counterparts. On the news, young Black children are inundated with images of bodies, like that of Michael Brown of Ferguson, MO., lying in the streets, an emblem of the justice that has been forgotten in our society. This issue is described in the Bible, "So justice is driven back, and righteousness stands at a distance; truth has stumbled in the streets, honesty cannot enter" (Isa 59:14). How can God use His church to repair the distrust between young Black men and police officers? How can God use restorative measures to reconcile and rebuke?

Restorative Justice as God's Biblical Solution

Two terms have emerged in recent years when referring to biblical justice: social justice and restorative justice. The term "social justice" is usually attributed to the Italian Catholic priest Luigi Taparelli from the Jesuit order in the mid 1800s (Dyer & Westfall, 2015). The term has been called "restorative justice," a concept that emerged through the theological influences of the Mennonite Christians in 1974. However, the original concepts of restorative justice can be linked to Africa and the Nguni Bantu term *ubuntu*, "I am because you are" (Van Ness & Strong, 2002). Notably in South Africa the historic Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) held restorative justice sessions to repair after apartheid (Levad, 2016). Also, the Victim-Offender Reconciliation-Project (VORP)

was then created and developed as an experiment to demonstrate God's peaceable kingdom within the criminal justice system (Noakes-Duncan, 2016). The VORP sought the reconciliation of victims and offenders, which stood in contrast to the retributive justice seen in the criminal justice system (Zehr, 2005). The goal was to seek *shalom* and reveal the injustices done by those in power (Noakes-Duncan, 2016).

The usage of the term "restorative justice" has increased through the years and was most notably developed by Howard Zehr, "grandfather of restorative justice," who furthered the work done among the Mennonites (Noakes-Duncan, 2016). Gade (2018) discovered that the usage of the term has increased since the 2000s by the United Nations and European Union, yet he fears the term may begin to lose its meaning in biblical origin (Gade, 2018). According to Schrey (1955),

Restorative justice alone can do what law as such can never do: it can heal the fundamental wound from which all mankind suffers and which turns the best human justice constantly into injustice, the wound of sin.... Restorative justice, as it is revealed in the Bible, alone has positive power for overcoming sin. (Cited in Van Ness & Strong, 2010)

Zehr (2010) explains that the idea of restorative justice seeks to reconcile and restore rather than punish and defraud. Oftentimes criminal justice brings to mind hard punishment for criminals, social justice brings to mind a justice primarily for the poor and powerless, while restorative justice speaks to both the restoration of criminals and reconciliation of the powerful and the powerless. According to Zehr, "respect" is at the core of understanding restorative justice (Pfeil, 2016). He states, "If we pursue justice as respect, treating all equally, we will do justice restoratively (Zehr, 2010). Alarid and Montemayor (2016) agree that respect between victim and offender is needed for the

success of American community policing (p. 460). In fact, the police should use restorative justice as a model (Alarid & Montemayor, 2016).

This biblical restorative justice is quite different than modern definitions of justice. The western imagery of justice is usually depicted by a blindfolded woman holding a sword in one hand and scales in the other (Marshall, 2015). This brand of justice is symbolized in this way to promote the idea that justice is blind. Thus, results of justice are the facts measured against the law. Justice is seen as measurable, depending primarily upon the weight of the law. While someone may appear guilty, their justice is determined by what can be proven under the law. If the law is changed, then the justice changes. If one can find a loophole in the law and prove their case, they can be awarded justice under the law. However, such retributive justice, unlike restorative justice, may not actually treat people fairly or seek to rehabilitate the wronged parties (Levad, 2016).

When we read the Bible, we can discover God's ideals for how the society should treat people. There are some important principles regarding protecting the most vulnerable that we can surely apply to our situation, especially when we consider the responsibility of those in power to create laws that protect those in our society. Evans (2015) calls this God's "motive clauses" that should motivate Christians today to treat people in an equitable manner. White (1905) encourages the church to understand and alleviate the problems of those in poor conditions, especially in the city. She encourages that negative conditions and people who are being wronged should not be ignored (White, 1905, 1906). White (1906) makes it clear of her duty to "reprove the oppressor and plead for justice."

It is the duty of the Christian to use biblical principles to defend the poor, alien, widow, and prisoner in our time. At the same time, we must also approach the text responsibly. Evans (2015) explains that in reading biblical covenant codes, one must also consider the sinful context in which these laws were given. Many laws should be interpreted with “hermeneutic of suspicion,” which is a critical interpretation of the text. Evans expounds that such laws like divorce, which Jesus referenced in Matthew 19, were introduced to protect the victim but also support the powerful” (Chapter 1, para. 45). Thus, we see that the biblical law carried instructive but also limited characteristics that allowed for human sinfulness. In this way, Evans concludes that the covenant laws serve as guides to help us find ways to speak to the powerful and the vulnerable.

God’s solution to ensure justice is seen by Him giving his people the *torah* and expecting them to treat others as He has treated them. “You shall not deprive a resident alien or an orphan of justice; you shall not take a widow’s garment in pledge. Remember that you were a slave in Egypt and the Lord your God redeemed you from there; therefore, I command you to do this” (Deut 24:17-18). God desires for us to do what He would do and this is why He reveals Himself by Jesus who demonstrates God’s justice. Marshall went as far to say, “the essential mark of holiness is a lifestyle of justice” (Marshall, 2015, p. 32).

Justice, in the biblical understanding, is not simply static law and order. Laws are as *just* as the legislatures who create them and *order* is only as righteous as the police who enforce them. Instead, biblical justice is fluid and an “activist response to systemic evil, a radical intervention” (Marshall, 2015, p. 33). Amos saw justice far from something prim, prescriptive, or predictable (Amos 5:21-24). Justice is like a “thundering river

rather than, as in the Western tradition, a neatly balanced set of scales” (Marshall, 2015, p. 32). As Marshall continues to explain, justice requires different reactions and even favoritism or bias, depending on the situation.

When it comes to those who are disenfranchised, poor, or immigrants, God takes special interests. So much so that a truly just society should actually seek to treat people disproportionate in comparison to their societal vulnerability to exploitation. “In the biblical understanding, the litmus test for measuring the extent of justice in society is how its most vulnerable members are faring (Marshall, 2015, p. 41). This statement speaks volumes to the unifying theme of God’s desire to defend the cause of the vulnerable throughout earth’s history. As Marshall (2018) puts it, there is room in our theology still to lament, to mourn and wail for the pain in our world.

Throughout scripture, the life of the mistreated and disenfranchised have cried out for justice. From the blood of Abel, the tears of Tamar, the pain of Jeremiah, and Job’s crucible, to the drops from the brow of Jesus in the garden, all have cried out. But still today justice stands afar off (Isa 59:14). The cries of justice can be heard throughout our society and in places where the church could and should effect change. It is troubling when you find pain where justice should dwell. This paradox and societal need for restorative justice will be discussed in the New Testament account of Jesus healing two blind men, the societal traditions in Old Testament Israel, the story of Joseph in the Old Testament, and in the life of Christ. In these biblical reflections, the themes of restoration, rehabilitation, and relationship can be observed.

Restorative Justice in the Joseph Narrative

The biblical story of Joseph can serve as a revelation of biblical justice and restoring community trust in the wake of injustice. In this portion of the narrative, we discover how reconciliation through God's divine directing led to restored justice and trust. Joseph was born into a family already wrought with years of distrust and unfair treatment. Apropos to the story, Joseph's own father was previously known as *Jacob*, meaning "deceit." Although the name has changed, an air of deceit seems to envelope this family.

His own brothers sought him harm because of their jealousy. When the brothers finally were alone with Joseph, they immediately plotted his demise. Their intentions were not hidden from Joseph, who was now a captive of his brothers, having to face the possibility of his own death. This punishment by no means was justified by a crime. However, based on their opportunity, perceived power over Joseph, and clear anger towards him, they seized the chance to enforce their will. In the end, it was Judah who convinced the brothers to spare the boy's imminent death and instead sell him to Ishmaelite traders that just so happened to be traveling past. So, they unjustly sold their own brother into slavery. Geoffrey (2012), in analyzing the Marcus Garvey inspired *Redemption Song* by Bob Marley, believes some of the lyrics compared Joseph being sold with that of the Africans selling their own people to American and European slave traders.

In subsequent years when Joseph and his brothers met again, it became clear that Joseph lacked trust for his brothers. A reversal of power has occurred, as Joseph is now a ruler in Egypt and his brothers came groveling to him for food during the famine Joseph

predicted. Joseph, however, took time to scrutinize the character of his brothers before revealing his identity. This trial period was an indication of how the history of injustice created a lack of trust between Joseph and his brothers so many years later.

Joseph decided to test his brothers to see if they had changed their ways and whether they could be trusted. The ultimate test was when he threatened to put Benjamin, his youngest brother, in jail for a trumped theft charge. When Joseph saw the willingness of the brothers to sacrifice their life for the youngest, it revealed a major change. Through these experiences, Joseph saw the changes in their character and the once-victim began to trust his offender. With Joseph, trust could be restored when the victim experienced an authentic change in the offender's behavior. The brothers proved that they had learned their lesson and were truly different. When the brothers realized Joseph did not punish them as they deserved, they became recipients of restorative justice.

Next, God used forgiveness and reconciliation to repair trust. Joseph and his brothers were reconciled when Joseph embraced his brothers. Joseph stood before his brothers, wept, and said, "I am Joseph" (Gen 45:1-3). But it is not until "he kissed all his brothers and wept over them" that the brothers started to talk with him. It seemed that they were in shock and needed to hear this explanation. It was not enough for Joseph simply to weep by himself, but he wept over them (Gen 43:30, 45:15). Similar to the restorative embrace by their father Jacob and his brother Esau, this was the moment that seemed to restore the trust (Gen 33:4).

Finally, God used the famine to create an opportunity for reconciliation. Joseph told the brothers "do not therefore be grieved or angry with yourselves because you sold me here; for God sent me before you to preserve life" (Gen 45:5). It is doubtful that

Joseph is excusing their actions; nor should the reader walk away thinking that every act of injustice is all well if the outcome is positive. What is suggested here is that God seeks to use every negative situation and turn it around for His good. Again, restorative justice is seen at work.

The next part of Joseph's story was his experience while incarcerated in Egypt. In this portion of the narrative, we see how privilege and valuing victims can be used to restore justice and trust. Clearly, he is targeted from the beginning by Potiphar's wife (Gen 39:7). When her sexual advances were refused, she cried rape, fudged the evidence by holding his coat, and cried persuasive tears that land Joseph a life sentence in prison. The punishment was lenient in that time for an accusation of attempted rape, but still harsh since Joseph was clearly innocent. This is an example of a failed justice system.

Potiphar used his position of privilege and power to enact injustice while later Joseph used the same privilege and power to grant mercy to his brothers. Also, this power and privilege is seen in the cupbearer, who later spoke to the Pharaoh that led to Joseph being justified and released. God's justice is often seen in the heart of those in power or those having privilege, who can enact justice for the victim. Joseph is a mirror for how Blacks can use power and privilege to receive justice.

The Pharaoh came to the aid of Joseph, not to restore justice, but because he heard Joseph would be useful to him. God had placed a need within the Pharaoh, through the experience of the cupbearer, and that need was only fulfilled through Joseph. "Pharaoh said to Joseph, 'I had a dream, and no one can interpret it. But I have heard it said of you that when you hear a dream you can interpret it'" (Gen 41:15). In the same way, our prisons and entire law enforcement system should be designed to cultivate useful and

upstanding citizens to return and contribute to society. On the local community level, we can also encourage this type of justice when we educate and train young Black men in trades that will be useful to society. As police and young Black men interact, they both can learn how valuable each are to the other in society. God restores trust by giving value back to the victimized.

In both portions of the narrative, God used the famine to create a reunion that allowed both victim and offender to repair wrongs which led to restored trust. And Joseph received justice from being wrongly imprisoned through the cupbearer's use of privilege and power. Joseph's ability to be used by God created usefulness and gave him value as a victim in the eyes of the Pharaoh. The Pharaoh granted justice based on Joseph's usefulness, whereas Potiphar abused justice in spite of Joseph's usefulness.

These principles can be used to repair mistrust among police and justice for young Black men. We can listen and learn to cultivate avenues of reconciliation God is using to repair wrongs and relationships. There are plenty of people in privilege, such as business owners, civic leaders, policymakers, governors and others. And we need to begin to see the value in the victims of police misconduct, racial profiling, and mass incarceration. Then, our society will be on a path towards biblical restorative justice.

Restorative Justice in Israelite Society

In the Israelite society, criminal justice for the city was found through the court gate system. Evans (2015) reveals that the society which Israel grew out of already carried social justice legal traditions (Chapter 1, para. 8). Traditions that included instituting "cities of refuge" were ways in which the ancient Hebrews promoted justice in the society. Biblical writers saw that God was already at work for the non-believers in the

society. God has always been at work using His people to influence and speak to the social justice of the society. Evans (2015) makes it clear that the God of the Old Testament was highly concerned with the well-being and protection of the most vulnerable, the poor, widows, immigrants, and slave (Chapter 1, para. 40). In the New Testament, Jesus healed people at the gate and claimed, “I am the gate; whoever enters through me will be saved. They will come in and go out and find pasture” (John 10:9). This system of justice was not in effect in the Greco-Roman era as Jesus walked through the towns. The poor and lame littered the streets within and outside the gates for “justice is driven back” (Isa 59:14). Westfall and Dyer (2015) argue that the institution of the church was the response to the socio-economic issues and need to care for one another (Introduction, para. 16).

Jesus restored the justice promoted in the Old Testament through the institution of the church. Westfall and Dyer (2015) go as far as to say that the church community in Paul’s time could be considered “the poor” as they dealt with suffering, victimization, resident aliens, etc. (Introduction, para. 18). In this way, it may be possible to read the stories in Acts through a framework of social justice.

A main goal for justice is the rehabilitation and restoration to right relationship or creative correctness. Biblically, those in power must seek to ensure fair treatment and fair judgment (Deut 16:18-20). “The fundamental goal of the biblical judicial system is to restore what has been damaged by the offender (Marshall, 2018). Justice is about ensuring healthy relationships between persons in the society (Marshall, 2015, p. 36). Justice seeks to restore on three levels: the victim, the offender, and the society. The main goal is not punishment, but restoration.

Evans (2015) shows how Adam's (2015) biblical *Covenant Codes* were used not simply to be judiciary but to motivate ancient Israelites to actually put to practice the justice represented in these codes. When these biblical codes are compared to the contemporary Ancient Near Eastern codes, we find that God's laws were more concerned about human life than for property loss. The harsh punishments we often attribute to minor offenses in the Old Testament were actually less severe than that of the surrounding nations.

Other nations, however, placed severe punishments when property loss was involved, while God's harsh punishments centered around the loss of human life (Evans, 2015, Chapter 1, para. 45). Marshall (2015) agrees and explains that the harsher the punishment given for an offense, the more it deters against the offense (p. 55). However, such punishment is not simply meant to be retributive because the goal was to restore to right-doing. This speaks to the "justice imperative" Adams (2015) explains that pervaded the Israelite society. Zehr (2015) takes the biblical idea of punishment and restoration to another level by redefining how we view criminal justice. As expressed by Evans, Zehr would agree that the Old Testament was not simply concerned about punishment, but about transformation of ones' behavior and restoring the trust in the community.

In America today, we place too much emphasis on punishment and not enough on correction. The issues of mass incarceration and police brutality reveal how easily we will condemn people in our society (Stevenson, 2014, p.14). The system is designed to keep criminals in the system. Felons are labeled for life and restoration has little place in our correctional prisons or jails. There must be a way to punish and restore. When God must bring justice to the world, He must acknowledge the need for punishment, but also

be restorative (Evans, 2015). This dichotomy is found in Jesus' death on the cross. For God, the symbol of the cross pays a debt of sin but also serves to restore the sinner.

Restorative Justice in the Classical Prophets

Our church and society should give ear to the solutions found in restorative justice. The Bible reveals that Jesus would come to establish justice in the earth (Isa 42:4). Part of this fulfillment came during Christ's homecoming sermon as He quoted Isaiah 61. In verse 8, we discover what the Lord loves and what he hates. "For I, the Lord, love justice; I hate robbery and iniquity" (Isa 61:8). God's love for justice being demonstrated goes even further with the message of rebuke by the prophet Jeremiah to King Jehoiakim. He says, "Are you a king because you compete in cedar? Did not your father eat and drink and do justice and righteousness? Then it was well with him. He judged the cause of the poor and needy; then it was well. Is not this to know me? says the Lord" (Jer 22:15-16). According to this passage, to know justice is to know God and to know God is to know justice.

In the Old Testament Hebrew, justice and righteousness are connected, interchangeable (Marshall, 2018). Only God is righteous, thus, justice is a defining characteristic of God. To know God would be to know justice. God's brand of justice reminds humanity of God's ideal, His creative correctness. This concept is summed up by the Hebrew word, *shalom*, which combines both peace and justice to form the perfect intended position for humanity (Marshall, 2015). There can be no peace without justice and no justice without peace (Isa 32:16-18; Amos 3:10; Micah 6:8). This justice is not punitive, but restorative in nature.

As Houston (2008) reminded us, the prophets of the Bible were concerned about the moral obligations towards the least of society. The prophets spoke out for the victims and the oppressed. They spoke against economic success that came on the backs of the downtrodden. Those who have cheated and lied at the expense of others will be held to account. God would bring restoration to the victim and deal with the offender.

Restorative Justice in Christ's Healing Two Blind Men

Jesus and his disciples were walking through the gate at Jericho when they heard two blind beggars crying out for mercy. These two men were among the many that would line the streets near the gate as people would come and go, especially during Passover. It was in this instance as blind Bartimaeus called out Jesus by His name and title in saying, "Jesus son of David, have mercy upon me," (Luke 18:39, NIV) that the Bible says that Jesus had "compassion" (σπλαγχνίζομαι) on them. This word is often used when Jesus sees people in situations of need or places of disenfranchisement.

These men were blind, which means they existed in the fringes of that society. They were beggars, which means they were poor and lacking dignity. They carried the stigma of being sinners by a superstitious religious system that demonized the downtrodden (John 9:2). They were also sitting near the gate of the city. The gate is significant throughout the Bible tradition because this was where justice was often administered for those in the city. In the Old Testament, the "court gate system" was the method God used to bring justice at the gate of the city (Deut 16:18). Absalom used this system to his advantage to gain the trust of the people because David had allowed injustice to creep into the city (2 Sam 15:2). In the *Torah*, Exodus 21:1-23:33, there

existed what is often called the *Covenant Code* (Adams, 2015). This was a part of the law code which judges used to make decisions for ancient Israel.

The justice at the gate was missing until Jesus, the judge lawgiving King (Isa 33:22), stood and attended to the needs of the blind men. It was the king's job to assure justice in the city and the men had called him out as "king" (Prov 31:3-5; Isa 28:5,6; Jer 22:2-3, 15-16; 23:5). The religious system and the government of the day had allowed justice to be tossed into the streets. Those with Jesus played their systemic brainwashed role and rebuked the blind men on their quest for just mercy. Stevenson (2014) reminds us that the system will cause people to deny justice and mercy to those who most need it. But the men do not allow opposition to silence their cries; the text says they "shouted all the more" (Luke 18:39, NIV).

Jesus stood still and paid attention to these men as a symbol of rebuke to those who would hinder or deny justice to those in need. He asked the question of justice that centered towards the deep "need" of the individual. He spoke to their heart because His heart has been moved towards them. When our hearts connect with the heart of God, we begin to have compassion on others. We begin to pay attention to systems that are broken and seek to reverse the damage that has been done. Today, we look around us and see that justice needs to be restored at the gate.

When Jesus touched the eyes of the blind, they immediately could see. This miraculous act allowed them access to a new status, economic position, and spiritual awareness. This act defied the ideologies of the day and brought justice back to a place that had been forgotten. The people experienced this miracle and it led them to give

praise to God. Like David, they gave praise to God because of his righteousness (Pss 7:17; 48:10).

This act of bringing justice back to the gate led people to follow Jesus. Most significantly, the blind men follow Jesus and they follow Him on the road towards Jerusalem. They would see Jesus enter Jerusalem as a king, but die there on a cross. The reality of justice being cast aside even affected God as a broken justice system condemned Him to death. God's love has been expressed in His justice no less than in His mercy. Justice is the foundation of His throne, and the fruit of His love. It had been Satan's purpose to divorce mercy from truth and justice. He sought to prove that the righteousness of God's law is an enemy to peace. But Christ shows that in God's plan they are indissolubly joined together; the one cannot exist without the other. "Mercy and truth are met together; righteousness and peace have kissed each other" (Ps. 85:10). (White, 2018, p. 72)

Restorative Justice and Jesus

The life of Christ is a model for our Christian churches and how they relate to justice in society. Matthew records one of Jesus' famous rebukes against the legalism and injustice of the Pharisees. Jesus said they had "neglected the more important matters of the law—justice, mercy and faithfulness" (Matt 23:23). Throughout His life, He demonstrated a life mirroring the restorative justice taught in the Old Testament. In fact, Jesus was heavily critiqued by the church for spending too much time with sinners (Mark 2:16).

The sinners had lost all respect and trust in the church officers and subsequently in God's ability to provide justice. The way Jesus solved this was by instituting His church as the means to seek justice for the least the last and the lost (Acts 2:47). Jesus taught that life's final question would be about what one did for the least of these because "whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers of mine you did for me" (Matt 25:40). His entire life was encapsulated in His homecoming sermon in Galilee one Sabbath day.

The scroll was handed to Jesus and He decided to read one of the social justice mantras from the Old Testament (Luke 4:18-19). In His quotation of Isaiah 61, it declares “He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners...to release the oppressed.” As Burton (2016) puts it, “This was a declaration of war against a system with principles that diametrically opposed those of his father’s kingdom. This was his call to social justice” (p. 3). Jesus restored trust among the powerful and the oppressed by establishing trust in God and the power of the institution of church.

The parable of the widow in Luke 18, illustrates a good God who wants to “bring about justice for his chosen ones, who cry out to him” (Luke 18:7). Throughout His ministry, Jesus would regularly disrupt the social systems and heal the undesirables and marginalized. As we read scripture, we see that Jesus never healed without offering remission of sins or a chance to become His follower. Note that when the church engages the community, restoration through felt-need or social ministries must be coupled with a call to follow Jesus. Similarly, a call to follow Jesus, such as at an evangelistic meeting, should also exist alongside restorative justice. The entire package is how God chose to show restorative justice at work.

Ultimately, God sought justice for the human race by sending Jesus to make war against the system of oppression and then to suffer at the hands of the oppressive local government and law enforcement. He was mistreated and sentenced to death, but it was this event that God used to reconcile the world to Himself. He is the Savior riding into the oppressed city to bring salvation to the people and judgment to the oppressor. The symbol of this salvation that leads to full restoration for the believer is realized at the cross. Thus, the cross becomes God’s symbol of salvation and restorative justice for all

mankind. This view of the cross has caused a change in Christian culture that seeks to bring restoration to our community.

Restorative Justice as a Model for Modern Justice Reform

Zehr (2015), along with many other theologians today, is becoming more convinced that “restorative justice” is the answer for criminality. This term has only been introduced to the western world since about 1970, but has increased in usefulness over the years. It seeks accountability from the offender to face what has been done and then leads to transformation. This gives an opportunity for the victims to be heard and to promote a healthy community. However, with the current system, such accountability would be hard to foster when currently telling the truth can land you a longer prison sentence. Yet how does the criminal repay a debt to society if there is no transformation and no restoration of the victims?

Zehr (2015) finds that the current system encourages the criminal to look out for themselves. Instead, the criminal justice system experience should teach accountability for actions and provide space to see what harm they have caused. Many times, because of how the prison systems work, criminals are mistreated and feel like the victims themselves. The system carries low motivation to restore one back into the community. This leads to the problems on the street where a supposed criminal can be mistreated by police because of their reputation or skin color. While an offense may have occurred and the interaction with law enforcement inevitable, the manner of which this confrontation concludes creates a precedent for how criminality is corrected in our society.

There is a way to correct the offender without the offender becoming the victim. So, if a police officer leads with the mindset that a troubled black teen will be restored

instead of just punished, they may curb the measure of force used. However, none of this is possible without both sides interacting in such a way that seeks restorative justice. In this framework, both can see hope for restoring the other and existing in a healthy society. Without restorative justice, there continues the perpetuated lack of truth and accountability that is spurred on by an “us vs. them” mentality.

This theology forces us to address criminals, prisoners, and even those whom our society deems dangerous, in a different way. When Jesus came to church quoting Isaiah, saying He had come to “set the captives free,” it begs for law enforcement and our judicial system to listen (Luke 4:18). We must seek to turn those deemed as criminals into contributing members of our society. Social and restorative justice are theological themes that allow this to happen.

A restorative justice theology can also address the poverty in our inner cities that often leads to criminal behavior or the perception by police that criminal activity is associated with skin color. Zehr (2015) reminds us that criminal justice and restorative justice ask two different sets of questions and seek two different outcomes. Criminal justice will ask “what laws have been broken?” while restorative justice asks “who has been harmed?” And while the former seeks to know who did the crime, the latter wants to understand what their needs are.

However, restorative justice is not as straightforward as other biblical concepts such as “love” or “hope.” Justice is less practically prescribed because of the multifaceted angles in which one can view particular issues. One may deem it unjust to have an abortion because of the harm it causes to the unborn baby. But another may deem it unjust to hinder abortion as it violates the rights of a woman’s body. This simple

example shows the complexity of trying to create a law that satisfies each perspective of injustice. Thus, in many cases for biblical justice to be realized under western law, it can be fairly challenging. As mentioned, in the biblical construct, justice was viewed as a value or ideal that surrounded one's implementation of the law. Thus, the punishment for violating a law was less rigid and more flexible based upon the situation. In the ultimate sense, only God can truly lead us toward a correct understanding of justice. Any conversation regarding justice apart from Him will fall short of its intended institution.

There is a fine line to walk when discussing Jesus and social justice. Many conservative writers and theologians push back on the extreme left that says Jesus was a socialist. On the other side one finds theologians who argue that not enough attention is given to the social gospel of Jesus (Westfall & Dyer, 2015, Introduction, para. 14). But while Jesus did not mandate government forced charity, He did set a huge precedent for Christians to address societal inequities and particularly restorative justice. This takes an even deeper meaning for America, who claims to be a Christian nation.

Ronald Sider's *Rich Christians in an Age of Hunger* in 1977 was one of the first publications to move the evangelical conversation towards biblical social justice. Since this, the conversation has moved from a theoretical one shouted by activists to a scholarly and theological investigation of the biblical text. The type of thinking that restorative justice requires is one that truly embraces the duty of the church outside the four walls. It is a ministry that connects with the community for change that is transformative and lasting. But restorative or social justice assumes that one can effect change in various levels of the justice system. This may not be as easy as we would like it to be.

There are enormous hurdles to cross when addressing such a large issue as criminal justice. The privatized prison systems bank off of the unjust laws and loopholes. The police culture and often blind defense of the “boys in blue” make it hard to insert effective checks and balances. And of course, the willingness of the victims to trust and be restored plays a role as well.

While restorative justice is the ideal, the practicality can be murky as results may not mirror the efforts. It would change the mentality and spirituality of many who for the most part have proven no interest in such ethics. If anything, it seems a solution will reside in how individuals, groups, and churches can lead by example in their neighborhoods. This can take place through much prayer, dedication, training, and meaningful partnerships.

Conclusion

This project uses the theological framework of restoration to create a program where police and young black males can interact in a restorative way. The desired end is to do God’s brand of justice where both the offender and victim are reconciled. Through the narratives of the blind men at the gate, we discovered that Jesus is the one who hears the cries for justice in our society. The story reveals a correlation to the current need for justice at the gates of our cities.

The story of Joseph uncovers how God is working to seek justice and restore trust through providential ways. He finds various ways through the story to transform the life of the offender and victims to conclude in a type of restorative justice. Instead of punishment, we find restoration and a commitment to defend the most vulnerable. This

idea of restorative justice speaks to the heart of God for *shalom* in the society. This theme is at the heart of God and reveals his love.

Christ's word and life reveals His character of justice. As we follow these basic principles we can hope to influence how crime is punished in this country and how wrongs are made right. Thus, an intervention can be developed where these principles are taught and demonstrated. An opportunity can be afforded by the church to bring both the police and young Black men together for a dialogical encounter. The goal would be to seek restoration, rehabilitation, and relationship.

An area that seems prime for further research is discovering how restorative justice theology can influence the church and justice system. Also, a deeper study into how Christ lived a life towards restoration and what that means for how the Christian lives. In the Adventist setting, exploring how a restorative justice department would be incorporated and impact the progress of the denomination.

CHAPTER 3

LITERATURE REVIEW

The only way to police a ghetto is to be oppressive...They (police) represent the force of the white world, and that world's criminal profit and ease, to keep the Black man corralled up here, in his place. The badge, the gun in the holster, and the swinging club make vivid what will happen should his rebellion become overt...He moves through Harlem, therefore, like an occupying soldier in a bitterly hostile country, which is precisely what, and where he is, and is the reason he walks in twos and threes. (Baldwin, 1962, p. 210)

This quote is taken from *Price of the Ticket*, where the famed author, James Baldwin, captures a pervading perception many Black Americans still carry towards law enforcement. As evidenced in Ferguson, Missouri in 2014, the police department often makes arrests and writes citations disproportionately against Black people (DOJ, 2015). This occurrence in Ferguson is similar to the occurrences in other cities across America. There is the current overwhelming problem of police brutality and excessive force specifically seen against young Black males.

The church needs a ministry program that can address these issues that have grown more visible in the recent years. Christian organizations such as “Justice Fellowship,” founded by Charles “Chuck” Colson, prove that the church can do a lot of good in the criminal justice system (*Prison Fellowship*). More attention needs to be given to the behavior of police officers, young Black men, and the overall relationship that results from these encounters. In America, we have observed communities protest in reaction to the problems between young Black men and law enforcement.

In this chapter, the issue under review is the overwhelming statistics that shows how law enforcement officers disproportionately relate negatively to Black American males. First, the history of racial disparity between police and African Americans in the United States is explored, which uncovers the main underlying issues that have created the swell of injustice we experience today. Second, this chapter examines current tensions, perceptions, and obstacles faced between Black communities and law enforcement.

Finally, the chapter reviews the solutions found in scholarship and the success that has been seen in recent years.

History of Black Americans and Law Enforcement

In the controversial book, *A People's History of the United States*, Zinn (2010) quotes Columbus (when first arriving in the New World and speaking about the natives) as saying, “they would make fine servants...with fifty men we could subjugate them all and make them do whatever we want” (p. 7). These words were the preambles to an American history that exploited Native Americans, and later Africans, as work slaves.

This history also tells of the European harsh nature of administering punishments for small crimes. Zinn (2010) references *The African Slave Trade* by Basil Davidson (1969), which speaks of a brutal punishment precedent held by many European countries. In England, even as late as 1740, a child could be hanged for stealing a “rag of cotton” (p. 26). But in the Congo, communal life persisted; the idea of private property was a strange one, and thefts were punished with fines or various degrees of servitude. A Congolese leader, after being informed of the Portuguese legal codes, once teasingly asked a Portuguese, “What is the penalty in Portugal for anyone who puts his feet on the

ground?” (p. 26). Many slaves, especially those from Europe, became slaves as punishment for petty crimes. Zinn states that crime and punishment have always been troubled areas of our American history. The quest to find just the right level of punishment to fit the crime seems to constantly venture toward the extreme (Alexander, 2012).

According to Balko (2013), it was actually in England where the first recorded organized police force started in 1829. The hope was to create a force that did not resemble an army enforcing the rules, but rather officers protecting its citizens. However, as Balko (2013) makes clear in *Warrior Cop*, the military lingo and structure still found its way into the very beginnings of the police force (p. 138). It is important to note the hopes of Sir Robert Peel, the founder of our modern-day police force, who wanted officers to avoid confrontation and be polite to citizens. However, research shows that in the American south, policing took a violent turn. The idea of slave patrols developed as the first way to police black bodies in America.

Williams (2010) agrees that slave patrols existed simply because of white racism and as a means to keep slavery alive in the South (p. 67). These early police were armed and acted at their own discretion to arrest and harass black slaves, even against the wishes of their slave masters (Balko, 2013; Williams, 2010; Nelson, 2000). It is vital to note that these patrols in the South were not formed to police the free whites, but specifically to police the enslaved Blacks (Balko, 2013). Because of this very important reason for their existence, police once engaged in brutality that was considered perfectly acceptable in that day. Like Blackmon (2008) states in his crucial bestseller *Slavery by Another Name*, “sympathy for the victims, however brutally they have been abused, was tempered

because, after all, they were criminals” (p. 5). These slave patrols would eventually morph into the official police force (Balko, 2013, p. 137; Williams, 2013, p. 75). This transition started in Charleston, South Carolina, where like in Georgia (the location of this project implementation), there is a historic stronghold for the Confederate South.

Shipp and Chiles (2014) express much of the same sentiment, as they believe the very existence for law enforcement, particularly in the American south, was to “monitor, control, and punish black people” (p. 82). They quoted one of the few scholars to research this issue in depth, Sally E. Hadden (2001), who says, “the new American innovation in law enforcement during the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries was the creation of racially focused law enforcement groups in the American south” (Shipp & Chiles, 2014, p. 15). According to Shipp and Chiles, the history of modern-day law enforcement can be traced from slavery, through post-emancipation policing, the Ku Klux Klan, and their relationship to the police force (Holt, 2010). Williams (2013) agrees that “cops and the Klan have been holding hands for years” (p. 80).

As quoted by Williams (2013), James Baldwin believed, “the police are simply the hired enemies of this population. They are present to keep the Negro in his place and to protect White business interests, and they have no other function” (p. 121). Potter, (2003) author of *History of Police*, which plays a significant role in the recent literature discussion, agrees that early police departments were formed not for crime control, but for social control and the “development of bureaucratic policing institutions” (p. 3). This is a major assertion that set a precedent for police departments ruling as a means to control and not protect. As will be discovered, this is the atmosphere and sentiment that remains today in many Black and urban neighborhoods.

According to Balko (2013), in 1845 America opened its first police department in New York as a way to counter the fast urbanization. These first police did not carry weapons, were required to live in the areas they policed, and often conducted community service projects. Balko explains that as the use of more sophisticated policing tools became available, surprisingly the cop car became one of the most dividing symbols. Police were able to patrol neighborhoods, showing their presence, but not actually having to interact with those they aimed to protect. According to Balko (2013), William Parker, of the Los Angeles Police Department in 1950, sought to create an even sharper divide between police and the community.

These police and community tensions were still the heaviest during the 1960s when the Civil Rights Movement was in full swing. The famous Civil Rights marches through Selma and Birmingham resulted in extreme police brutality against peaceful Black marchers, which highlighted the strained relationship. Porter (2014) suggests that “the use of professional police forces to suppress the Civil Rights movement, often by brute force did irreparable damage to American policing” (p. 14).

In more recent history, we see the formation of the “war on drugs” in America by former President Richard Nixon, to be directed as a war against blacks. In confirmation, former Nixon domestic policy chief John Ehrlichman is quoted as saying, “The Nixon campaign in 1968, and the Nixon White House after that, had two enemies: the antiwar left and black people” (LoBianco, 2016). Alexander (2010) supports this admission and seeks to prove that the criminal justice system has created a new racial caste system here in America. But not everyone agrees that the tension between police and Black communities is entirely race related. In response to Michelle Alexander’s work in *The*

New Jim Crow, James Forman Jr. (2012) initially agreed that there are race components, but argues that we must look at the issue of crime and punishment as a whole. He believes that there is more to unpacking the root of crime and understanding the system as a whole.

Forman (2012), like others who attempted to paint a different view from Alexander and supporters, generally agrees with the history, yet differs on painting with such a broad racial brush. Shipp and Chiles (2014) also believe there is more to the problem than race. They cite that more prisoners equal more money for the private prison companies. This has led to more aggressive police behavior in arresting those that are the easy targets, mostly black and brown bodies (Coates, 2014). Although this gives some reasoning for police misconduct, many would say it does not answer the question as to why police are gunning down Blacks who are one of the highest consumers for the economy (Holt, 2010). However, history has reminded us that it did not make sense either when early slave patrols beat slaves to death, essentially destroying what they considered to be property.

There is still a racial component in the policing of today. Racial profiling still occurs, as is proven in the many recent documented occurrences (Rafail, Soule, & McCarthy, 2012; Rios, 2012; Rice & White, 2010). Individuals like Mike Brown, Tamir Rice, Walter Scott, Freddie Gray, and other unarmed Black men killed by police, reveal that Black people are not given the same benefit of the doubt as their White counterparts. Shipp and Chiles (2014) add, “there is no basis for assuming that an innocent population shares the same characteristics as the criminal suspect population in the same area” (p. 74). They emphasize that any police officer who pulls someone over because he or she

shares the same color as the mass population of criminals is violating the U.S. Constitution. However, it is hard to prove motive when analyzing each arrest. It is frustrating that in the 21st century, black and brown bodies are still being killed at alarming disproportionate rates and without showing any lethal threat to the officer (Rios, 2012; Shipp & Chiles, 2014, pp. 79, 80).

In 2015, *The Washington Post* reported nearly 1,000 shooting deaths by police (Kindy, Fisher, Tate, & Jenkins, 2015). Of these deaths, Black people are disproportionately affected, accounting for almost half of the deaths in 2015 (Walker, 2016). Statistically, Black men make up 6% of the U.S. population, but are among 40% of the unarmed deaths by police (Kindy Fisher, Tate, & Jenkins, 2015). Of the 990 deaths that occurred by the hands of police in 2015, criminal charges were brought in 1.7% of the incidents, and only 0.4% resulted in a conviction (Walker, 2016). Walker (2016) agrees that the criminal justice system is operating as it was designed to and the system fails to provide proper care for communities left decimated after a shooting (p. 792).

The problems we see today can be traced throughout history. This has played a role in current Black perception of law enforcement and recent events have heightened the tension between the two sides (Jefferis, Butcher, & Hanley, 2011; Alexander, 2012).

Current Climate Between Black America and Law Enforcement

As discussed earlier, the history of policing has played a major role in the pervading distrust of law enforcement in many Black communities. In much of the literature, there is agreement on the disproportionate numbers of Black male incarceration compared to any other racial group, a vast disparity among Black people killed by police, and greater filing of police misconduct within the Black community (Wellington, 2015;

Alexander, 2012; Shipp & Chiles, 2014). These facts have greatly contributed to the current relationship between police and Black Americans.

Embrick (2015) notes that “many minorities say that race relations between Whites and minorities have either not changed or have gotten worse” (p. 4). A 2015 CNN/ORC Poll found that 69% of minorities think that the criminal justice system is biased, favoring Whites over Blacks (The Opportunity Agenda, (n.d.). The Mapping Police Violence website confirmed these feelings by giving a monthly report of the Black people killed by police officers. In August 2015, that number was 27, with the average of one black person killed every 28 hours (“Mapping Police Violence,” 2015). According to the findings of Chaney and Robertson (2013), these statistics have remained relatively constant with their reports from the National Police Misconduct Statistics and Reporting Project on police brutality (p. 4).

Following the death of Trayvon Martin in 2012 in Sanford, Florida, one year later the “Black Lives Matter” hashtag was born, and a movement began in protest of police brutality (Lorenzo, 2015). This movement, that some have called the “next civil rights movement,” has had much controversy regarding their tactics (Wellington, 2015). According to Wellington (2015), race is a greater issue than class, and thus he sees Black Lives Matter as filling the void of what the Occupy Wall Street movement did not address (p. 20). He critiqued the Occupy Wall Street movement as missing the mark to address the bottom of the 99%--the African Americans and Native Americans. He explains how the election of Barack Obama caused people to think that race was not a big problem in America anymore. However, what disturbed the Black community was that a

country could elect a Black man, but still not seek to repair the system that kept Black folk down.

Wellington (2015) quotes one of the founders of Black Lives Matter, Alicia Garza, as saying, “Black Lives Matter is an ideological and political intervention in a world where Black lives are systematically and intentionally targeted for demise. It is an affirmation of Black folks’ contributions to this society, our humanity, and our resilience in the face of deadly oppression” (p. 20). Wellington strongly believes that the Black Lives Matter movement is essentially about advocating for the civil rights of Black people here in America. In November 2014, the Black Lives Matter movement founders were able to sit down with the President, which as they said, “confirmed that their work had garnered massive support” (Wellington, 2015).

In September 2015, *The Huffington Post* reported the retirement of North Carolina police chief, Mike Halstead, after his 662-word post speaking out against the Black Lives Matter movement (Izadi, 2015). *The Post* cites Former Governor Mike Huckabee as professing that Martin Luther King, Jr. would be “appalled” by a movement (Black Lives Matter) that focuses on the skin color of those who have been killed by police (DiCaprio, 2015). Arguments like this show the disparity of believing a problem exists that police brutality disproportionately kills Black people. The disbelief, or justification, of this disproportionate treatment of police against Blacks is a result of media that promotes the stereotype of violent offenders as minorities (Embrick, 2015, p. 839).

Embrick (2015) argues with authors Jefferis et al. (2011) that in fact, the faith in police by Blacks has diminished even more in recent years (p. 838). Chaney and Robertson (2013) suggest that the Rodney King beating of 1992 by the Los Angeles

Police Department (LAPD) is a good starting point to track the police relations progress. This infamous case of the LAPD beating Rodney King half to death on camera gained tremendous support in protest against police brutality. Even with Mr. King as the poster child for why police reform is important, today we still find an enormous dissatisfaction in Black communities of how “bad police” are not punished for crimes against Black people (Walker, 2016).

Michael Tonry (2010) explains that Whites often excuse police brutality against Blacks simply because of the “animus” they hold against Blacks. In other words, Blacks deserve the harsh treatment because they are more likely to commit a crime or are often involved in criminal activity. Chaney and Robertson (2013) believe this comes from the “prototypical criminal” view of Black males. Black males look like criminals and that the darker the skin, the broader the nose, the fuller the lips, the more people view the individual as a criminal (Chaney & Robertson, 2013). Embrick (2015) states that this perception is the fault of the media, which paints angry Black protestors in a negative light (p. 838).

When Blacks are violent or rioting, the media discusses “Black on Black crime” and a need for improved Black communities. However, when Whites engage in the same behavior, there is no mention of “White on White crime” and a need for improvement in White communities (Embrick, 2015, p. 839). The media adds to this perception that trickles down to the court system that classifies Black males as the typical criminal (Staples, 2011; Gabbidon, 2010). This is the concept of “Negrophobia,” most recently coined by Shaun Gabbidon (2010). It is the fear and justification of shooting Black people based on stereotypes. Chaney and Robertson (2013) add that “Blacks are more

likely than Whites to make complaints regarding police brutality, to be accosted while operating a motorized vehicle (Driving While Black), and to underreport how often they are stopped due to higher social desirability factors (p. 3). The troubling question, they asked, is how this can be tolerated in a country that prides itself in the freedom and justice of all (Chaney & Robertson, 2013).

Myrdal, (1944) as cited in Chaney and Roberson, (2013) claims the following in regards to a legacy of bad police relations with Blacks: “The average Southern policeman is a promoted poor White with a legal sanction to use a weapon. His social heritage has taught him to despise the Negroes, and he has had little education which could have changed him...The result is that probably no group of Whites in America have a lower opinion of the Negro people and are more fixed in their view than Southern policemen” (Chaney & Roberson, 2013, p. 4). Current research still agrees that less educated police officers tend to be more aggressive and have more complaints filed against them when compared to more educated officers (Hassell & Archbold, 2010; Jefferis et al., 2011; Rydberg & Terrill, 2010). Savali (2012) adds that police officers have begun to believe the stereotype about Black men that “controlling crime is roughly equivalent to intensifying law enforcement against minority individuals or...communities” (para 4). Jefferis et al. (2011) agree with other authors on this subject that see the mischaracterization of Blacks, particularly Black men, as creating the disproportionate use of lethal force.

Chaney and Robertson’s (2013) research reveals that the Black community perception of police can be categorized by four main themes: (a) contempt for law enforcement, (b) suspicion of law enforcement, (c) law enforcement as agents of

brutality, and (d) respect for law enforcement (p. 6). There is agreement that the first three play a large role in the current perception that Blacks have towards law enforcement (Greene & Gabbidon, 2013; Staples, 2011). And only a few short years after Chaney and Robertson's study, these first three themes can be found most prominent in Baltimore, where the protest for Freddie Gray took the news media by storm in 2015.

Von Drehle et al. (2015) agree with Chaney and Robertson's conclusion that the undercurrent perception of law enforcement distrust exploded the riots in Baltimore (p. 35). They say, "when police violence is so common it has its own patois, a city has a problem" (p. 36). They go on to explain how the city has a history of riots and unrest as seen in the 1968 Baltimore riot. In the article, Tavis Smiley gave his viewpoint by reminding us that not much has changed with Martin Luther King, Jr.'s big three problems: racism, poverty, and militarism, which are still major problems today (Von Drehle et al., p. 36). "The suffering of everyday people gets rendered invisible if they don't find a way to express it" (p. 36). Baltimore in particular "paid out nearly \$6 million in settlements to more than 100 victims of police brutality in the four years from 2011 through 2014, according to "Policing Baltimore's Police," (2015, p. 36). In Baltimore, we can clearly see reasons why there is such a poor relationship between Black men and police.

As we move from the issues in Baltimore to the issues of Ferguson, we find a possible root to the current racial tension around the country. Rothstein (2014) argues that public policy was at the root of the problem in the Ferguson outrage over the death of Michael Brown by police officer Darren Wilson. Rothstein believes it is the history of racial discrimination over housing, zoning, and real-estate in the private and government

circles that have caused the current tension. The United States Department of Justice report, which came out in 2015, supported these assertions in their investigation of the Ferguson Police Department. The report uncovered that in Ferguson, there exists “racial disparities that adversely impact African Americans” (p. 5).

The United States Department of Justice report made it clear that there was discrimination taking place within the police department toward the Black community. These practices, they found, were the reasons for such “deep mistrust” between the African American community and the police department (p. 5). This report revealed there is a need for advocacy for the victims of such discrimination and education for those young Black men who will most likely face racist police officers. The language speaks very closely to the ideas of restorative justice.

Not everyone agrees that the cause of the problem is race; some believe the problem could be the result of a historic precedent that treats those lower on the caste system in a more brutal manner (Blair et al., 2011). The debate centered around what standard the officer should be held to during intense high adrenaline situations. Some argued that “officers are unfairly held to a superhuman standard” when faced with life and death situations (Blair et al., 2011, Wihbey & Kille, 2015). Officers are constantly dealing with the worst of society and are working in an environment where they encounter more young men of color. Wihbey and Kille (2015) note, “after years of police work, officers often can’t help but be influenced by the cynicism they feel” (para. 27). The belief is that this type of saturation can cause officers to appear racist when they are simply a product of the environment they have learned to profile.

Shipp and Chiles (2012) would argue that it is the police department that chooses to ignore crimes in White neighborhoods, that creates environments where crime appears more prevalent in Black communities (p. 208). Von Drehle et al. (2015) add what Joseph Capista believes—that policing in White neighborhoods is less combative and more respectful than in Black neighborhoods (p. 38). Smith and Holmes (2003) believe it is the police department that contributes to the negative perception officers carry for Black males by focusing more attention on crime in poor Black communities instead of affluent White communities. So, the argument that Blair et al. (2011) hold is that if the poor population was White, then we would find the same disproportion of White men dying by the hands of police (p. 326). There is some debate over whether the problem is due to an unfair perception of the poor or due to hidden racism.

The current climate of distrust among African Americans toward law enforcement is multifaceted. As we have examined through the literature and research, the problem may lie in the economy, the neighborhood in which the officer lives, criminal saturation association, police racial bias, or in the lack of convictions of “bad” police officers. We have seen a national reaction to this subject—the birth of movements like Black Lives Matter, and a report by the Department of Justice that validates the climate of a poor relationship between Black communities and local police. The literature continues to insist that the problem is historical in nature, perceived by a group of people that have learned to distrust the system of policies bent to keep them down. And this has birthed a distrust for the law enforcement officers that appear as the most present face of a system that has left them disenfranchised and hopeless. Luckily, there are a number of studies regarding the solutions to this problem.

Solutions to the Problem of Police Brutality Against Black Males

DiAngelo, as cited by Friedersdorf (2015), agrees that Blacks and Hispanics are disproportionately victimized by “misbehaving police officers” (para. 2). She believes the solution is for the culture to become less racist, and then the police brutality will become less common. She also expresses the solution as needing to “change the water officers swim in” (Friedersdorf, 2015, para. 2). She defines water as being the “unexamined whiteness, the everyday whiteness” that she believes is the “most hostile for people of color” (Friedersdorf, 2015, para. 5).

In this report, DiAngelo believes that changing the whiteness of our society will decrease the nature at which Black people are treated unfairly. In her opinion, labeling some neighborhoods “good” and others “bad” is what allows for the misconduct. However, Friedersdorf (2015) explains his disagreement with what he quotes from DiAngelo. He challenges her solution and calls the idea of changing “the water that we all swim in” as being a “misguided approach” (para. 7). He does not believe that racism will be fixed, and instead presents other solutions for the problem. Such solutions include mandating body cameras, civilian review boards, instituting proper rules for tasers, protecting whistleblowers, and changing policing tactics.

Like Friedersdorf (2015), Waldman (2014) sees the solution to be better race relations. Waldman (2014) argues that police expect to encounter people with guns, but are not properly skilled in deescalating volatile situations (para. 5). Hirschfeld (2015) references Waldman in his belief that “elevated rates of police killings are rooted in American-style individualism,” particularly their gun culture. He discovered that eight

out of the ten states with the most police killings take place in the Mountain or Western regions of the country. “The gun culture (together with racialized fears) imbues American policing with danger” (Hirschfeld, 2015, p. 5). With this culture comes those who put themselves in dangerous situations to appear more “macho” and further the “warrior mentality” that leads to more lethal force (Balko, 2013; Hirschfeld, 2015). Although Hirschfeld failed to give a clear solution to the problem of police brutality, he did suggest, however, that reforms in deadly force policy and gun controls may lead to a solution.

Instead of gun control or reformed policy, Blair et al. (2011) argue for a better understanding of the definition of what they call the “reasonable officer.” They assert that the public has a misperception of the difficulty it takes for an officer to make split second decisions in volatile situations. “This type of public reaction may trigger the frustration that police feel when the community seems to believe that suspects with weapons should get a ‘free shot’ before being fired at by police officers” (Blair et al., 2011, p. 329). Walters and Feist (2010) agree that it can be difficult to define police brutality or excessive use of lethal force, but in certain situations it is clear (p. 376).

Bittner (1975) notably defines police as the “mechanism for the distribution of non-negotiable coercive force deployed in accord with an intuitive grasp of situational exigencies” (p. 46). According to him, police are defined by their ability to use force and it is difficult to determine what is lawful force. Thus, solving this problem creates various views especially when the problem is left open for interpretation. However, the man who started the first police force, Robert Peel, defines the purpose of police, “to prevent crime and disorder as an alternative to the repression of crime and disorder by military force

and severity of legal punishment" (Walters & Feist, 2010, p. 3). He goes on to explain that police can only perform their duties as long as the public whom they serve and protect approves of their existence, actions, and behavior. They, the police, have the responsibility to "secure and maintain public respect." So, if the outcry from the Black community is that police are using too much force, then the police have a duty to maintain public respect. There is a need for more conversation from the perspectives of both sides on how either feels.

Another important conversation to have includes properly defining police brutality as an extenuation of the overall classification of police excessive force. There are seven subcategories under excessive force as defined by William Geller and Hans Toch (1996). They are quoted here because their definition is what many authors refer to when speaking on this subject. These categories include,

(1) *Any* force when *none* is needed; (2) *more* force than is needed; (3) *any* force or a *level* continuing after the necessity for it has ended; (4) knowingly wrongful uses of force; (5) well-intentioned mistakes that result in undesired uses of force; (6) departmental constraints that needlessly put officers in the position of using more force--and/or using it more often--than otherwise would occur (e.g., problems with training, supervision, deployment, assignment practices, equipment, procedures, and policies precluding use of certain tactics or tools); and, (7) frequent use of force by particular officers, particular units or departments, even if each instance seems justifiable. (Geller & Toch, 1996, pp. 292-293)

The public generally believes excessive force to mean any action by police that degrades the citizen's basic human and civil rights. The public gives the police power over them when they are out of line with the law, but expect to be treated in a decent manner (Walters & Feist, 2010, p. 379). Having a proper understanding of the legitimate roles of both officer and citizen is extremely important during a confrontation.

Walters and Feist (2010) set out on a dialogue that expressed a number of opinions regarding how police brutality and misconduct can be viewed and prevented.

One view agreed with Peel, that the police are answerable to their citizens and should be properly restrained and held accountable by the public (Walters & Feist, 2010, p. 375). In other words, the police need to be policed. Without public trust, a pivotal line is crossed as the police become enforcers of political elites without being accountable to its democracy. In the dialogue, the other opinion believed there are restrictions with how much the public can really prevent or should interfere with police business. One must consider the difficult nature of policing and the difficulty of assessing excessive force under intense circumstances (Walters & Feist, 2010, p. 376).

In Ohio, where incidents such as the police killing of the young boy Tamir Rice have occurred, an executive order set up a task force to explore the cause of the fractured relationships between Black communities and law enforcement (Kasich, 2012). The task force discovered what Semuels (2015) later echoed about successful solutions in Ohio: that good community problem-oriented policing (CPOP) is the answer (para. 8). He noted that Cincinnati made small changes that completely turned around how the city approached incarceration, crime, and its relationship with its residents. For these changes to take effect, the federal government paid close attention and held them accountable.

Once proper accountability was instituted from the task force, the changes were as follows: (a) The police department vowed to hold a press conference within 12 hours of any officer-involved shooting and to provide information as well as camera footage from the event; (b) It agreed to track officers who received an inordinate number of complaints or who violated policies, and take disciplinary action if needed; (c) It established a “citizen complaint authority” with investigative and subpoena powers over police; (d) It adopted new use-of-force policies, changed guidelines on when to use chemical spray,

and established a mental-health response team to deal with incidents in which a suspect may have mental-health problems (Ohio Task Force on Community-Police Relations, 2015).

The result of the task force and what was found in the Cincinnati model was to present a picture of what “community policing” actually looked like. It described how officers were required to arrest less and seek to solve the root problems that caused the initial crime. They were required to get out of their cars and walk the streets, ask questions, interact with those who they would traditionally be battling.

Samuels (2015) refers to the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) that shows how good community policing is not about addressing each small crime, but rather about attentiveness to the general health of that community. Truly trying to understand the culture and find ways to make it better is the kind of policing Cincinnati sought to create. The officers would have to actually get out of their cars and hold conversations with the public. This idea of officers getting out of their cars alluded to Balko (2013) in his historical account of police cars being seen as community barriers. The ACLU found that this kind of policing was less focused on arresting people and more focused on solving the root of the problem (American Civil Liberties Union, n.d.). This focus on policing speaks to the restorative justice aspects of law enforcement (Walker, 2016).

The United States Department of Justice (2015) report on the investigation of Ferguson, Missouri concluded with 12 solutions to solving the plethora of problems surrounding police misconduct and racial profiling in Ferguson. Many of these solutions for Ferguson can be applied to similar cities across the United States. Among those that stood out included implementing a robust system of community policing; change force

usage that would encourage de-escalation and use of minimal force necessary in a situation; change response to students to avoid criminalizing youth while maintaining a learning environment; implement measures to reduce bias and its impact on police behavior; improve training; increase civilian involvement in police decisions; develop mechanisms to more effectively respond to allegations of officer misconduct, and increase education (United States Department of Justice, 2015, p. 92).

Alarid and Montemayor (2012) previously stated that restorative justice tactics also need to be implemented with the communities most affected by these shootings (p. 451). The idea of victim-centered policing is a concept that takes community policing even further. This concept increases the awareness of the officer towards the community being policed. When victim-centered policing is implemented, it pushes the traditional policing methods and demonstrates true concern for the community. The chart best describes how restorative justice looks when compared to traditional policing and community policing styles (Figure 1). The following chart has been adopted from an article done in the *Police Practice and Research* international journal (Alarid & Montemayor, 2012, p. 452).

Table 1. Comparing traditional policing, community policing, and victim-centered policing.

Characteristics	Traditional policing	Community policing	Victim-centered policing
Main goals	Law enforcement; deterrence through increased presence	Community building and crime prevention	To reduce the harm caused to victim and community, and to help offender self-regulate future behavior
Reactive or proactive	Reactive; procedure or means-driven	Proactive problem solving	Reactive and proactive; values-driven
Behavioral focus	Crime	Crime, social, and physical disorder; fear of crime	Harm caused by offender's behavior
Police responses to unwanted behavior	Arrest, order maintenance; agencies absorb community problems	Arrest, order maintenance, and community service; problem solving; working with local agencies	Victim assistance; referrals; victim-offender mediation; community owns its problems
Victim involvement	Minimal; state represents the victim	Encouraged; state represents victim	Victim(s) actively meets offender(s) or a similar group of offenders
Type of law imposed	Criminal law	Criminal, civil, and administrative	Civil and administrative
Primary accountability	Police administration	Community members and local police supervisors	Victim(s) or community members
Organizational structure	Centralized	Decentralized within the community	Decentralized within the community
Range of community involvement	Passive, not typically expected	Active; neighborhood watch; citizen patrol initiatives and programming	Heavily reliant on community members; participation in case facilitation, decision-making of formal and informal sanctioning; crime prevention boards; volunteer patrol units; explorers
Measures of police success	Arrest rate; clearance rate; crime rate reduction	Fewer calls for service; citizen quality of life/fear reduction; use of public places; community partnership building	Restoration of harm; victim/community satisfaction; level of social capital and collective resolution of problems

Note: Portions of this table were taken from 'Community Policing in America: Changing the Nature, Structure, and Function of the Police.' *Criminal Justice 2000* (Vol. 3). Washington, DC: US Department of Justice (Greene, 2000, p. 311).

Figure 1. A table comparing traditional policing, community policing, and victim-centered policing.

In a manual created for action against police brutality, the ACLU notes that despite the problem being a national one, it must be fought locally (“Fighting Police Abuse,” n.d.). The federal system has simply been unable to sufficiently address and prosecute cases of police abuse. The Department of Justice does not have enough personnel to tackle the amount of cases pending. Thus, it will take individual communities following the suggested solutions to solve the problems on a local level.

Panwala (2002), along with the ACLU, agrees that convicting officers has proven to be more difficult for a number of reasons. In many cases, it is hard to gather enough

evidence and proof to convict. Also, many officers are wary to bear witness against another officer and so create a “blue wall” of silence. But as Panwala (2002) suggests, there may be more benefits in allowing federal courts to strictly investigate and prosecute local police misconduct cases (p. 645). Because of current laws that allow the DOJ to dictate how the local law enforcement operates, there should be more fear by police to act appropriately. Panwala (2002) believes that the threat of a possible federal lawsuit would be enough to curb behavior, but shows how this is simply not enough (p. 654).

At the time of this writing, the recent events since 2002 have proven that the problem of police misconduct, under the eye of the DOJ, has not curbed, but instead received national attention. Panwala (2002) makes a case that local prosecution would need to resolve these issues for the simple reasons that the DOJ does not have the personnel necessary to follow up on every case, and also because the local community would have the best ability to hold elected district attorneys responsible to do their job in handling police misconduct and brutality. In short, she believes that allowing federal courts to sue local law enforcement departments on civil matters and allowing local prosecutors to address individual police officers would be the best solution.

Vitale (2014) disagrees with most of the solutions from Panwala (2002). Vitale believes that less policing is the answer to racial disproportionate arrests and brutality in this country. He asserts, “what we really need, though, is to dial back our reliance on the police to resolve neighborhood disorder. For instance, we have overwhelming evidence that the policing of drugs is a corrosive strategy that has done nothing to reduce their negative impact on communities” (Vitale, 2014, p. 4). Instead of fixing the police, Vitale calls for additional community services that could rehabilitate inmates and address

mental illness in the streets that does not require the involvement of law enforcement.

Vitale (2014) agrees with the restorative justice theology that underlies solutions of victim-policing laid out by Alarid and Montemayor (2012). This is an area that would be great for local churches to begin addressing in their prison ministries or social justice departments. Churches can also begin to promote legislation that defends the rights of citizens and sets the country on a path to change.

In recent years, lawmakers have disagreed that less policing is the answer, but they do believe they can pass legislation that can change the practices that may be causing the problems. On September 16, 2014, the Stop Militarizing Law Enforcement Act was introduced by Representative Henry C. Johnson. This act would amend the programs that sent excess military gear to federal and state law enforcement agencies. On December 10, 2014, he introduced the Police Accountability Act, that makes officers more accountable for actions under federal law. On December 18, 2014, the Death in Custody Reporting Act of 2013 became law as introduced by Representative Robert C. Scott that requires the head of each federal law enforcement agency to report to the attorney general annually certain information regarding the death of any person on their watch. The Smarter Sentencing Act of 2015 introduced by Senator Mike Lee, a Republican from Utah, is another important piece of legislation that would greatly decrease the sentence minimum for drug offenders. This would address some of the issues caused by the “war on drugs” as discussed by Alexander (2013).

Although legislation can be passed and some problems solved, Shipp and Chiles (2014) argue the solution lies in our behavior and knowledge. The system prohibits racial profiling and brutality, but these two phenomena are still common across the nation.

“Young black males must educate themselves as much as possible about search and seizure laws, probable cause, and all the other rules and regulations that control the actions of law enforcement” (Shipp & Chiles, 2014, p. 238). President Barack Obama supported the education of young black males, especially in regard to behavior. In February 2014, President Obama launched the *My Brother’s Keeper*, or MBK, an initiative to address persistent opportunity gaps faced by boys and young men of color and ensure that all young people can reach their full potential. His goal was to help young men stay on track by providing them with mentorship to make it through life.

Along with the detailed guidelines for interacting with police, as found in *Justice While Black*, the ACLU also created a manual for local citizens to counter police brutality. It gave detailed information with step-by-step goals and strategies (Shipp & Chiles, 2014). The manual promoted large community involvement with the police department. It emphasized citizens being proactive in holding their local police department accountable. They suggested that building coalitions, monitoring police, using open record laws, educating the public, using the political process, organizing civilian review agency, and lobbying for state legislation are all important strategies when addressing police brutality. In a more recent report, they advocated for the formation of independent civilian review boards that would carry disciplinary authority in police excessive force cases. It encouraged officers to use the narrowest use of force possible during a confrontation (ACLU, 2015).

The variety of solutions prove that there are several options that can foster better interactions with and perceptions of local law enforcement. Only time and proper implementation will determine the best solution, as this is an ongoing discussion.

Conclusion

The literature written over the last five to ten years overwhelmingly reveals a problem with police brutality against Black males. Many solutions have been suggested and tried, however, the common success seems to remain with types of community policing. For this to take place in Dougherty County, the church needed to play an active role in initiating communication and opportunities between the police and the community.

One area needing further research is that of churches advocating for and educating the young Black men who are being targeted. The research focused mostly on the police department and systemic legislation overhauls as solutions, but very few authors offered solutions that the victims and offenders can implement for themselves.

CHAPTER 4

CONTEXT FOR MANUAL DEVELOPMENT

The research revealed the need for building positive relationships between law enforcement and the Black community. The subject of police brutality in the Black community has been a major topic in the recent years. The divide has been made even clearer with the 2017 social backlash against certain football players in the National Football League (NFL). These players chose to sit or kneel during the national anthem before football games. The irony is how this tradition of NFL players standing for the national anthem, began just recently in 2009 (Curran, 2017).

The protest began with former San Francisco 49ers quarterback, Colin Kaepernick, for the purpose of bringing attention to the many young Black men whose lives were being lost at the hands of law enforcement at a disproportionate rate than their White counterparts (Weffer, Dominguez-Martinez, & Jenkins, 2018). Since the election of Donald J. Trump, the 45th President of the United States, there has been an increase in protest, particularly around the subject of policing and race (Heaney, 2018).

Although the protest during the NFL national anthem have been about policing, there have been those who see the kneeling as a disrespect to the country and military. This divide in opinions was magnified by the unprecedented comments by President Trump. In his statements, he encouraged a boycott against the NFL owners for allowing professional football players, whom he called “sons of bitches,” to kneel during

the national anthem without any repercussions (Graham, 2017). This call for a boycott against the NFL ironically came during another boycott led by a Seventh-day Adventist pastor, Debleaire Snell, in Huntsville, Alabama (Helm, 2017). His boycott against the NFL, termed “Blackout,” sought to blackout the Black viewership in response to former quarterback Colin Kaepernick’s NFL unemployment status. The name played on the NFL policy since the 1970s to “blackout” games on local television stations if fewer than 85% of the seats have been sold. Instead of watching football on Sunday, Pastor Snell encouraged people to do work in the Black community to reach boys that had been targeted by unfair policing.

Just as Pastor Snell’s congregation from the First Seventh-day Adventist Church used their platform to address the problem, this project sought to provide a model for churches to use. The issue Colin Kaepernick brought up is the very issue this intervention attempted to address—policing in the Black community among young men. Churches are positioned in key places throughout many Black communities and can serve as hubs for this intervention. This intervention created a standard operating procedure manual for churches to implement, which the writer has titled *Faith, Integrity, and Training Intervention*. This manual can be implemented by partnering with schools and police departments in order to encourage positive and effective communities of trust with young Black men.

The manual is divided into three main sections which include some of the solutions towards developing trust. Each section in *Faith, Integrity, and Training Intervention* drew directly from solutions found in the literature and theological reflection. This intervention was developed from this research and overall objectives for

communities in America as prescribed by the Department of Justice report surrounding the issues of policing in Ferguson, Missouri. The design and data collecting instruments used in this intervention were adapted from the 2014 *Teen Empowerment's Youth Police Dialogues Evaluation: Final Report to the Fetzer Institute*. In this study youth and police were also brought together for an intervention. The instrument used in this study was also used to evaluate the perception changes.

Each section of the *F.I.T. Intervention* manual was connected to areas in the literature and theological reflection and was designed to be used and distributed during the sessions of the intervention. This manual is available in the Appendices.

Profile of the Project Context

In Dougherty County, the Black population is much higher compared to the state percentages, with 72.8% Black and 22.3% White. Crossing over the county line to the north is Lee County, with 74.4% White and 21.1% Black, with a racist past. This reveals a noticeable divide contributing to the racial tension in this southern region.

The areas carry quite a historic past of civil rights struggles. The Albany Movement coalition led in this fight. This group was famous and included protestors like Martin Luther King, Jr., who was arrested and jailed by his opponent police chief Laurie Pritchett. Like Dr. King, the chief also practiced non-violence when directing his officers to deal with the marchers. The strategic approach by the police and the inability to correctly respond by the movement led to Dr. King believing he had failed in the area. However, the lessons Dr. King learned were used to further the movement of civil rights in Birmingham, and later throughout the nation.

Currently in Dougherty County, there remains numerous hurdles to overcome. In an analysis by 24/7 Wall Street, *The Atlanta Journal Constitution* published Albany, Georgia, Dougherty County's main city, as being the seventh of 50 worst cities to live in America. There are 30% of the population living in poverty, which is higher than the state average. Education levels are low and a high percentage live without health care. There has also been reported higher per capita homicides in the area.

In spite of the various challenges, Dougherty County has a Historically Black College and University classified school, Albany State University. There is the Marine Corps Logistics Base that brings military personnel to the area, and the Kendrick brothers' film company is based in Albany. The area is blessed with visionaries that have been working on solutions for the city. Recently, numerous coalitions and organizations have formed to unite churches, city leaders, and concerned citizens to address problems in the county. This intervention is implemented at a time when the city is looking for solutions to resolve tension and problems. The four main law enforcement offices—county, city, school, and Sheriff's departments—and two of the main high schools nearest the Emanuel Seventh-day Adventist Church have seen the value in implementing the intervention model.

Development of the Intervention

This intervention developed from the success found with community policing tactics as documented in recent literature. Most directly, it has drawn from the Department of Justice (DOJ) 2015 report during the presidency of Barack Obama. The DOJ report offered, suggested, or recommended several measures on community policing

as a major solution in addressing their police departments overwhelming bias against the Black community in Ferguson, Missouri. Among the measures recommended are:

1. Implementing a robust system of community policing;
2. Change force usage that would encourage de-escalation and use of minimal force necessary in a situation;
3. Change response to students to avoid criminalizing youth while maintaining a learning environment;
4. Implement measures to reduce bias and its impact on police behavior; improve training;
5. Increase civilian involvement in police decisions;
6. Develop mechanisms to more effectively respond to allegations of officer misconduct;
7. Increase education (Department of Justice, 2015, p. 92).

The intervention also built on the theological reflection of restorative justice and how it can impact the community. Restorative justice speaks to reconciliation and discovering how God seeks justice for the oppressed and the oppressor. As two sides have developed in this conflict, there is a need for reconciliation and restoration. God seeks to restore justice through restorative measures. These measures consist of reconciliation, restoration, and relationship.

This intervention specifically focused on young Black men developing healthy relationships with local police officers and it made an intentional effort not to cast blame on either side. The attempt was to defuse the negativity by entering into the world of the other through dialogue, training, and activity, in hopes of learning a new perspective and

changing behaviors. The objective was an effective community of trust developed between the officer and the student involved in the intervention program.

This intervention used the theological framework of restoration to create a program where police and young black males can interact in a constructive way. The desired end was to do God's brand of justice where both the offender and victim are reconciled and restored. God's justice is connected to his character of compassion and his desire for *shalom*. The principles found in this intervention sought the peace of the community by seeking to restore faith in each other and in God.

F.I.T. Intervention Manual Development

The topic of restorative justice has gained much needed traction with Christian theologians as we see more relevance in our society. The amount of inequities now spoken about in the mainstream media has forced Christians to consider the implications of justice throughout scripture. As theologians write more scholarly pieces, we discover consistent themes of social justice and charity present in Adventist doctrine. This has created a precedent for the Adventist Church to develop more theological entries and conduct ministry models centered around social and restorative justice.

The *Faith, Integrity, and Training (FIT) Intervention* manual is a community-based program designed as an intervention to foster effective communities of trust between police and young Black men. Faith, integrity, and training were important characteristics for the intervention that addressed the main areas of need: (a) Faith: developing faith or trust between the young men and the officers by seeking to understand each other's challenges and worldview; (b) Integrity: building moral values within their personal and professional identities for how they behave and interact, and (c)

Training: teaching proper procedures and legal power, and knowing how to de-escalate situations or comply during confrontations.

The intervention developed from the biblical concept of restorative justice, where two countering sides reconcile to bring restoration. In 1 Chronicles 12:8 of the Bible, we find the description of fierce warriors from the Israelite tribe of Gad, the Gadites. Their discipline and ethics toward battle were unmatched as King David welcomed them to join his growing army. This is significant because the Gadites were previously loyal to the house of King Saul.

In this biblical game of thrones, Saul and David were enemies until the untimely demise of King Saul by his own hand. The house of Saul subsequently lost the Kingdom to the house of David. The idea that Saul's Gadites would join David speaks to a repair of relationship and trust that was lacking while Saul still lived. Their ability to connect with their former enemy for the sake of defending their families and values shows a shift in their perception. This shift seemed possible because of who they were as *fit* warriors that were able to see the bigger picture for the sake of creating one united front for battle.

In the King James Version of the Bible, the English word "fit" is inserted as a way to qualify these warriors' preparedness for battle. Could their fitness have contributed to their ability to reconcile with David? They did not come seeking revenge, but they came seeking restoration. Our communities need more people fit like the Gadites. People who would be willing to put aside their differences and misconceptions to unite for the betterment of their country and society.

The word *fit* is used to correlate preparedness and reconciliation for our communities and is used as an acronym for the structure of the intervention. The Gadite

warriors had three described characteristics: faces like lions, quick as gazelles, and trained in military combat. The intervention is structured by three characteristics of faith, integrity, and training. We have seen in recent years the exposed mistrust that still stands between police and communities of color. Imagine if modern day Gadites were developed on all fronts of the community who could join together by bringing their abilities to create a better community.

This type of intentional dialogue has been especially important for the success of community policing. Based on the outcome of this study, this training model will be institutionalized as a church community-police ongoing relationship building model offered to Dougherty County. It is expected that those who undergo the dialogue and training in the future will learn and demonstrate responsible sensitivity towards each other.

“Faith” Section I

The first of the three sections in the manual is on *faith*. This section considers the first recommendation of the DOJ report and explains how to implement a robust system of community policing. The issue of policing revolves around trust and how it can be established in communities of color. During this session, the history of mistrust by Blacks towards police throughout America’s history was recounted and summarized to clarify the context. The example of mistrust was explained by retelling the story of Philando Castile, a young 32-year old Black man who was shot in 2016 by a Minnesota police officer. The officer made a fatal judgment call based on his perception of the situation. From this officer’s decision, the conversation around policing Black men in America and

the deeper issue of “implicit bias” has grown over the years (Russell-Brown, 2017, p. 137).

In this section, the question was posed as to whether either group can learn to trust the other. The students and officers began to imagine a world where they develop trust and faith in each other. This reimagining pointed back to Sir Robert Peel’s original desire for policing and hopefully further from Balko (2013) and his description of the modern-day warrior cop. An activity was presented called “For or Against” to teach the group how to understand different points of view. The second activity, called “Fishbowl,” allowed for individuals to share their thoughts and feelings about the problem, while the others listened. Both activities sought to give a voice to both parties in order to hear the depth of mistrust in hopes of creating a stronger community.

The section continued with groups of twos sitting down and answering some of the tough questions about policing in America. After the discussion, there was an opportunity to explore ways to continue these conversations and be intentional about police and community engagement. The last activity allowed the officers and students to switch roles and share the challenges they face in their day with the other. They then switched back and discussed what was accurate or inaccurate about the role-play. This exercise caused the participants to think critically about how the other person thinks and what they experience. All these activities were centered around relationship building and hoped to foster ways that lead to more effective community policing.

The intervention was designed to allow dialogue where emotions and thoughts could be expressed. This type of emotional release has been illustrated in the story of Joseph. In this narrative, we found that God was working to seek justice and restore trust

through providential ways. He found various ways through the story to transform the lives of the offender and victims to conclude in a type of restorative justice. The reconciliation led to the restoration of the relationship. Through discussion and activities, the hope was that either side would begin to see from the other's perspective. There was a portion in the "faith" section of the manual that encouraged entering into the other person's world. This lesson and connected exercise were designed to foster relationship and reconciliation.

"Integrity" Section II

The section in the manual on *Integrity* considered the third, fourth, and seventh recommendations of the DOJ report on how to avoid criminalizing youth, to reduce bias that impacts an officer's behavior, and to promote education. As has been seen through various portions of literature, the perception of Blacks in this country is demonstratively negative by police (Blackmon, 2008; Alexander, 2011; Stevenson, 2015; Russell-Brown, 2017; Butler, 2017). This section focused more on how to curb one's behavior to avoid mimicking the stereotype. Police were encouraged to reflect on their tactics and biases. The young men were encouraged to consider how they carry themselves and behave around authority. In the end, either side considered their personal integrity and reflected on how it added to the overall well-being of the community. Methods and best practices were taught on how to be the best "young man" or "officer" towards an effective trust in the community.

This section emphasized the importance of both the police and the young Black men to deny stereotypical actions in their personal life. This section drew from the work of Candace Decaires-McCarthy in *The Impact of African American Male Authority*

Figures Who Transition into Role Models in Adolescents' Lives: An Exploratory Study.

The idea is that police, especially African American police, can be role models to young Black men. This section prompted the participants to imagine the community and society in an ideal way. It helped create a dialogue about how they would like their world to be and how they could co-exist for the others' betterment. Here, the manual explores principles on integrity and discusses what it means to be a productive professional citizen.

Many of the activities in the manual were adapted from the 2014 study by the Center for Public Safety Initiatives entitled *Teen Empowerment's Youth Police Dialogues Evaluation: Final Report to the Fetzer Institute*. However, this study was limited in that it did not include young Black men as a target population which statistically is the demographic disproportionately targeted by police and who typically have negative perceptions about police (Walker, 2016).

This intervention sought to accomplish that end by engaging Black American youth from an alternative school in Southwest Georgia and students from Dougherty High School. This study challenged young Black men who have had negative perceptions of the police to join in conversation with the police officers in their community. Alternatively, it gave the police officers opportunity to challenge their perceptions of young Black men that may be inherent in them.

“Training” Section III

The section in the manual on *training* considered the second recommendation of the DOJ report on how to change force usage in police departments. The hope was to encourage de-escalation using the least amount of force necessary. Examples of success

in this area have been seen in places like Cincinnati, Ohio, where new policing practices being tried have resulted in positive outcomes as documented in the 2015 Ohio Task Force community-police relations final results report. Communities in Salt Lake City, as reported by *Fox 13* in May 2017, have seen police implement new de-escalation tactics that have allowed them to curb the number of fatal shootings. Programs in Chicago, New York City, and Oakland similar to the *Know Your Rights Camp* founded by Colin Kaepernick, have had success in teaching young Black men their rights and knowing how to behave when interacting with a police officer (Cooper, Mccaulay, & Rodriguez, 2017). In this session, these tactics were discussed and taught.

This section built on the first section of faith and allowed the officers and youth to engage in realistic scenarios. The officers were challenged to show how they would de-escalate a situation while the young Black men were taught how to remain S.M.A.R.T. (Stay calm, Move slowly, Answer with wisdom and respect, Remember you will have your chance, and Trust in God) under pressure. The training educated the youth on their civil and legal rights during encounters with police, similar to the *Know Your Rights* camp. A portion of the training section of the manual was adopted from Robbin Shipp and Nick Chiles' work titled *Justice While Black*, and Laura Coates' book *You Have the Right*.

The concept of victim-centered policing was introduced as presented by Alarid and Montemayor (2012). Here, the officers got a chance to discuss the type of policing they currently engage in, whether traditional, community, or victim-centered. The ideas revolving around victim-centered policing were explained. They learned that this policing style has been focused on reducing harm and has allowed the community to feel there is

dual invested interest in their success. The officers were encouraged to share ideas on how they could begin to incorporate the concept of restoration and rehabilitation in their everyday policing.

Restorative justice was the basis for the design of the intervention model. While direct harm may not have been caused between these particular participants, this intervention allowed for a cathartic release. While most police or Black men may not take responsibility for the “bad apples” in their community, they are often marked guilty by association. This exercise allowed the participants to see each other in a light that countered the common stereotypes. Instead of casting blame or prejudging the entire group, they began to see the individual.

“Conclusion” Section IV

The final section was a summary and action plan opportunity to effect actual changes in behavior. Here is where the success stories of other communities, police departments, and youth were shared and discussed. At this point, the groups began making plans to implement the activities they chose during section 1. During this portion of the intervention, many of the themes derived from the theological reflection and literature were reviewed and reinforced.

All three of the sections (faith, integrity, and training) has been built on the idea that Christ seeks to restore individuals into God’s just community. Each section has been built on promoting *shalom* and seeking justice and has aimed to promote God’s brand of restoration and justice.

The titles faith, integrity, and training connect to attributes of God. He is faithful and the only one that can restore trust and truly be trusted. He is perfect in all His ways

and is the example of integrity in how He lived His life on earth. He is all knowing and the source of all knowledge and education. He, through His Spirit, trains us how to be like Him. Through prayer, the inspiration of His Spirit teaches people how to live right in every situation of life. Prayer was not a verbal portion of the intervention conducted in a public school, nevertheless, the church was still encouraged to pray for Christ's Spirit to restore the participants during the intervention. Thus, Christ has been the spiritual fuel behind this intervention.

Description of the Intervention

This section examined the context, procedures, timeframe, evaluation instruments, data collection methods, recruiting tactics, and incentives, and discussed the content of the intervention.

Context and Procedures

The intervention sought to bring together Dougherty County police officers from the Sheriff, County, City, and School police departments with young African-American males from two Dougherty County high schools. The selected officers came to the school, where they interacted with the young men in a designated area through the school counselor's office. The young men met the officers during school hours. The program took place within three weeks and they met between one and two hours during each of the sessions. There were two sessions each week, which were divided as Part I, Part II, Part III, and the Conclusion.

The reading for each section came from the *F.I.T.* Intervention manual. The originator of the program, an ordained minister and local pastor, moderated all sessions. The researcher read the information and facilitated the instructions. The length of the

program was three weeks because of two important observations: (a) The students at the alternative school stay in that school for only a short period of time before transitioning back into regular school. The brevity of the program ensured that those who started the program would finish the program. (b) Since this program is not yet an institutionalized part of the county, it was difficult to find police officers on or off the clock with the time to dedicate much more time than three weeks.

Timeframe

Each session lasted between 1 ½ hours to 2 hours long. The officers and youth met together and began with the first part of the program regarding “Faith,” followed by “Integrity,” and finally ending with “Training.” The three sections may have overlapped through many of the sessions. During each session, they were asked to engage in the discussion or activity for each particular session. The particular sections were written out and given to them in a workbook type format. There were teaching lectures, breakout sessions, role-playing, and general discussions.

The district school board was asked to approve the program for the young school age men. The students involved in the program received excuse from classes where interference occurred within their normal schedule. The intervention was estimated to take a total of 12 hours over a span of three weeks with two sessions occurring each week. It is important to note that there was a post intervention program that did not involve the police directly. Before the intervention began, the participants were given consent forms and pre-surveys to fill out.

Evaluation Instrument and Data Collection

This project conducted a mixed methods study using an experimental design. A pre-survey was administered prior to the commencement of the intervention and a post-survey at the completion of the intervention. The 2014 *Teen Empowerment's Youth Police Dialogues Evaluation: Final Report to the Fetzer Institute*, granted permission to adopt their survey instrument. The pre- and post- survey was used to evaluate any perception change that occurred between the police and young Black men after participating in the intervention. The data was analyzed using the IBM Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) software version 22.0. Significant changes between the pre- and post-surveys were identified to measure participant change in perception.

Each participant was instructed to be truthful and forthcoming on the survey because their answers were left anonymous. The participants were asked to answer anonymously, however in order to compare specific changes in perception, a code system was used. This code assisted in effectively analyzing the data. Each participant randomly picked a code from the numbers provided and marked the number on the top of their pre-survey and post-survey. They were asked to record their code somewhere safe that they could refer to when filling out the post-survey. The answers from both surveys were compared, and the results were measured if there was any change in the opinions and perceptions.

There was also an informal evaluation administered through the researcher's observations. These notes recorded impactful moments and the dialogue that occurred. In between the sessions, there were perception checks that were done with various participants in order to receive their feedback on the intervention. Also, a designated

school counselor was present be in the room and gave observations and feedback. The notes taken from the program were evaluated for prevalent themes. The themes, notes, and data were reported in order to discover a picture of the overall intervention experience and results.

Recruiting Participants

The school system and police departments both shared invested interest in the positive outcome of the intervention. Each entity was instrumental in facilitating and encouraging the recruitment of participants. The process by which these individuals were recruited is described here.

Youth Recruitment

The school principal and school counselors were first consulted regarding the intervention and given the *F.I.T.* manual for review. Then, school counselors and administrators recruited the students by putting out an announcement for participants. They were subsequently selected through communication with the school teachers and staff. They suggested individuals they believed would most benefit from the program, as well as those students who expressed a desire to be part of the study. The students from the local alternative school were considered at-risk youth. The selection process included answering some questions and interviewing with the researcher prior to the intervention. This interview ensured the willingness of the students to participate in the study, during which time informed consent and guardian consent forms were distributed.

Police Recruitment

Each police department chief was met with for a dialogue regarding the intervention and given the *F.I.T.* manual for review. They were then requested to select officers whom they believed would best benefit from the intervention and who were willing to complete the program in its entirety. The chiefs were encouraged to recommend officers from various racial makeups who had an interest in implementing community policing tactics. They should be officers who wanted to improve their perception of young males in the African American community. Prior to the first session, there was an interview between the researcher and officers to ensure their willingness and understanding in participating.

Incentives

The incentives offered to all the participants included a free lunch available during the session and a gift card, provided they completed the intervention. The non-tangible incentive for the officers was the opportunity to be proactive in addressing an issue that is currently being discussed across the nation. A police department that fails to address a controversial police shooting and subsequently is tainted by negative public relations could easily lose the trust of its community. This is especially true in a county like Dougherty, where the Black population largely outnumbers the White population. If their departments are able to say that they have completed a program like *F.I.T.*, it will show their willingness to address the issue.

The non-tangible incentive for the young Black men was to be heard. They were able to ask questions, be straightforward, and get some things off their chests. This program gave them an avenue with which to vent and receive some answers to questions

that may have troubled them for years about the procedure of policing Blacks in America. Hopefully, this gave the officers a new perspective on these particular young men. It also provided the young men with evidence that they have tried to better themselves and work with police in a positive way. Any unforeseen incident they may encounter in the near future involving the law, would hopefully be abated in light of such an accomplishment.

Content

The content was derived from the literature review and theological reflection. The intervention required dialogue and training between police officers and young Black males to determine whether perceptions can change and responsible sensitivity can be developed towards each other. The *Faith, Integrity, and Training Manual* was developed to promote dialogue and training during the intervention. As the research has suggested, community policing and interaction between police and young Black men can assist in building trust and changing perceptions.

The participants read brief summaries from the literature and theological review and engaged in discussion that addressed areas of misperception or sensitivity. Better training is another area that the research suggested could aide in relations between police and young Black men. The manual allowed for role-play and education on how to best interact under various circumstances.

This manual gathered the most vital information gleaned from the research and theological reflection and presented a summary for a useful interactive group setting. The goal was that those who have undergone the dialogue and training will learn and demonstrate responsible sensitivity towards each other. The manual was used to intervene and assist in the dialogue. See Appendix A for the full manual.

Conclusion

This project addressed the main issue raised by the NFL players who have knelt for the anthem as a way to protest the injustice done towards young Black men in America's justice system. As statistics showed, most cities across America are in states that have disproportionate incarceration and police misconduct numbers towards Blacks. The area of Dougherty County has not been immune to this issue nor to the bigger issue of racism.

The *Faith Integrity Training Intervention Manual* has been especially adapted from the literature, particularly from the solutions found in the Department of Justice report. The theological reflection informed the underlying theology and emphasis on restoration in the project. With prayer from the church, the desire was to see Christ's restorative characteristics become a part of this project implementation.

Further research and reflection could be gleaned from cities that implement the F.I.T. Intervention program and that have recently experienced a controversial police shooting of an unarmed Black youth. It is hoped that the implementation of a project like this one would affect perception change. In many ways, this study in Dougherty County is quite proactive. While there is a general mistrust of police held by people in the Black community, Dougherty County has not experienced national attention for police misconduct or brutality. Additionally, research could also be conducted analyzing cities that have implemented the program and their likelihood of having future incidents of misconduct. Along with this, questions that can be posed are, how lasting are changes in

perceptions in the community? And how likely are police departments to actually use the tactics discussed?

Finally, reflection can be done on how to implement permanent models of restorative justice within the local municipal courts and transform ways officers deal with each community. It would be beneficial to see a community come together on all levels and implement restorative justice tactics on every level. Dougherty County can benefit from such an innovative restructuring.

CHAPTER 5

IMPLEMENTATION

The purpose of this study was to develop, test, and employ a training intervention model that facilitates a community of trust between law enforcement officers and Black, male, American youth. The goal was that those who had undergone the dialogue and training would learn and demonstrate responsible sensitivity towards each other. Could the intervention change perceptions through dialogue, training, and questions?

It became clear that this intervention was much needed for the young men and police officers. It proved to provide an enlightening experience for all who participated. Since the implementation of the intervention using the *F.I.T.* manual, other schools and organizations have inquired how to conduct the program for their settings. The Dougherty High School is suggesting to have all of their young Black men go through the program.

This chapter will present a concise narrative of the intervention implementation proceedings. The sections will follow the *Faith Integrity Training Intervention Manual* (see Appendix A) through the narrative.

Initial Communication and Setup

The first communication began with the local church, Emanuel Seventh-day Adventist Church in Albany, Georgia. Many of the sermons and trainings revolved around the biblical concept of restorative justice. As the board began to study the

demographics and the broader issues in society, it became clear that there was a need to conduct an intervention for young Black men. During a community action training, it was discovered that some of the members had a yearning desire to focus on this particular demographic in the church's ministries. The intervention was introduced and explained to the board and a vote was taken for the church to approve and sponsor the project.

The church agreed to provide the meals that would be offered during the sessions. Church members also sponsored gift cards to give to the participants. A few of the members attended the intervention as observers. The church was encouraged to pray in support of the efforts that would be done in the area.

Following the church's approval, appointments were made with the Sheriff, county police, city police, and the school police departments. Each meeting included the department's police chief and usually an officer that dealt with community relations. That community relations officer became the primary point of contact. The *F.I.T.* manual was given to them and the project explained in detail. It was expressed that the program would benefit the department. Their participation would display their community awareness and intentionality in addressing a nationally known problem in police relations in Black communities.

Every department appeared extremely open and excited about being involved in the program. The consent forms were given and explained. They were informed that their department could assist by offering at least two officers to participate in the intervention project. All four of the departments agreed to participate and appeared genuinely excited about the initiative.

Before entering the school, a background check for the researcher was administered by the Dougherty County school district building. Next, an appointment was made with the school superintendent to receive approval from the school board. After explaining the program in detail, the *F.I.T.* manual, project protocol document, and consent forms were given to the superintendent for approval. In a few weeks, the approval was granted.

The principal of the Southwest Georgia Achievement School is a member of the Emanuel Seventh-day Adventist Church, and some of the staff at Dougherty High School were familiar with the church, which helped with the smooth arrangement of various details. The school counselors were informed about the project and began arranging the school schedule for the program's start. In a meeting, the manual, project protocol, consent forms, and the student demographic needed for the study were discussed. The counselor gathered a list of students that fit the profile and the students were invited to learn about the program.

The counselors helped gather the students and ensured that their consent forms were turned in and parents were properly notified. It was decided to allow the students to have an extended class period. The students were given a brief introduction of the program and were informed what participating would require. The interview with the students is described in the next section.

Interviews

In both schools, the school counselors gathered the students together in a private setting and allowed time for dialogue. In both settings, the young men appeared relaxed, curious, and open as the information was reviewed. Many of the young men seemed

eager to engage and discover more about the topic. A brief summary of the *F.I.T.* manual was presented and explained, then the project protocol was discussed, and finally they received the consent forms and were instructed to bring the completed forms with them to the first session.

The students were made aware that they would be in the room with police officers from various departments in the Dougherty County area. Only one student expressed concern about talking with police officers. His concern was that the sessions should be conducted in private, as to avoid the appearance of “snitching” to the police. It was evidently important to him and to some others that being seen speaking with the police could do harm to their reputation and their safety. Once it was assured that they would be meeting in private, the confidentiality agreement was re-emphasized.

There were no other concerns and everyone agreed to be involved in the study and expressed positive anticipation for the experience. The conversation flowed naturally as most of the young men started expressing their grievances and concerns with negative experiences they have had with police officers. They were looking forward to being heard by the officers and even began to vent their feelings. It is significant to note here that the tenor in which the young men expressed themselves in the interview was vastly diminished when they spoke during the intervention with officers present. Once each document was presented—the *F.I.T.* manual, the project protocol, and consent forms—the incentives for being in the program were discussed. The students were reminded to bring back the consent forms and to arrive at the designated location for the start day.

Intervention Narrative

Twenty-four young Black male students ages 13 to 17 from two schools in Dougherty County met for four sessions of the Faith Integrity Training intervention program. Fourteen police officers from four law enforcement departments in Dougherty County, Georgia joined with the young men. Because there were two schools involved, the intervention was conducted twice at the different school locations. The descriptions of the intervention below reflect the identical proceedings except where expressly mentioned.

The young men arrived first as the teachers and guidance counselors pulled them out of class for the extended session. Before they encountered the officers, the students filled out the pre-survey regarding their perception of police officers. The officers arrived and were given their pre-surveys to complete prior to the start of the intervention. Each officer and student were given a number that they were instructed to write down somewhere they would remember. The number was placed on the top of the survey. This same number would be placed on their “post-survey” to directly compare the results and better measure direct perception changes.

Once the surveys were completed they all were invited to join together in a room. The consent forms were collected from each participant and initial pleasantries exchanged. The session began with additional explanations regarding the structure of the *F.I.T.* manual and a review of the protocol, especially the confidentiality section.

Session I: Faith

The intervention began with the faith building and rapport section of the *F.I.T.* manual. This section began with a brief identification of the social and political discussion as outlined in the research. The group received a copy of the first section of the *F.I.T.* manual entitled “Faith.” The purpose of this section was to discover the areas of trust that needed repair and to build rapport between the officers and young men in the intervention. Refer to Appendix A for the information that was read.

The large group was separated into smaller groups and were asked to discuss their answers to the following questions:

- What was your reaction to the shooting of Philando Castile?
- Do these viral videos help or hurt the ability for police to do their jobs effectively?
- What are your thoughts on Colin Kaepernick kneeling during the NFL’s national anthem?
- Where do we want to end up as a society in our relations with police?
- What are some solutions to the trauma some Blacks are experiencing?

The participants were invited to answer as honestly as possible in their groups. The young men stated that they had not heard about Philando Castile’s story specifically, but had heard about other instances of police brutality on their local news. They felt that the videos do help people see what is taking place because without the footage, many would get away with wrong-doing. They did not seem to have a grasp on the fact that many police officers are not arrested or convicted even after such videos are released.

The youth also revealed they did not fully know why the NFL players were kneeling during the anthem. Some thought they knelt to protest the flag or the current President of the United States, Donald Trump. Only a few of them actually knew that they knelt to bring awareness to the unarmed young Black men who were being shot by police in America.

The young men did express their personal fear of police. They felt that police often perceived them as to being “up to no good.” Many of them mentioned their distaste for being around police officers. The officers explained that many of the stories released are isolated incidents. They assured the group that they cared about their community and hoped an incident would never occur in this county. They explained how they are very intentional and careful when making their arrests and assumptions. They also explained to the young men that they need to be mindful of the company they keep in order to avoid suspicion.

During both interventions, the police naturally began to coach or mentor the young men. They were reminded that the project was about a dialogue and to not to take over the conversation. Some of the young men spoke up, but others were less vocal. When the officers interrupted or asserted their adult authority, it seemed to intimidate the young men. Some began to shut down when their opinions were rebutted. The small groups were called back to the larger groups in hopes to better moderate the general discussion.

The officers did express that they were disappointed by how the Philando incident was handled. They expressed that there are bad apples in each department and they were not proud of how they were being perceived in the media. This led to them

acknowledging that public opinion plays a large part in the success of their job. They expect and rely on the cooperation of the community to assist them in doing their job, and when that trust is breached it is very difficult to do their work. The students were encouraged to respond to how hearing that made them feel. Many shared that it was good to hear that officers were not all the same.

Some expressed how the negativity made the divides even sharper. Some solutions were discussed to address the negative narrative that is often heard.

- Viewing positive images of police interacting with young black males broadcasted on the media
- Creating spaces of accountability for community and police
- A willingness for departments to be honest and open about needs for diversity training and sensitivity when interacting with people in the black community
- More activities and events in the city that allow the police and the community to interact

The students and officers were asked to separate into evenly distributed groups to break the ice and begin the section titled, *Welcome to My World*. They read the text outlined in the manual. Together the officers and youth were invited to create a plan for sustaining community policing in their particular neighborhood. The following questions were posed:

- How will you both be intentional about learning each other's worldviews?
- Will that mean spending a day at church together?
- Will you take a ride-along, where the officer takes the young man with him for a prescribed period of time to experience police life?

- Maybe a positive interaction together at school, work, or home where the officer takes on the role of mentor or big brother/sister and steps into the young man's life for a period of time?
- Would you like to experience a "how would you react" simulation where the officer takes the young men to a controlled simulation site that shows just how difficult it can be to react in intense situations?
- Could they have a viewing of the Netflix original documentary, *13th*, which gives much insight on the perspectives of black people in this country and why there is so much fear and mistrust?
- Could the churches get involved by hosting dinners that bring them together and make space for further discussion outside of a controlled setting?

They were told to choose from the list or come up with their own ideas on how to engage each other in positive ways. Most groups settled upon the ride-along and watching the Netflix original documentary, *13th*.

In the large group the police officers were asked to share the toughest part to being a police officer in America. Some shared the following:

- Feeling the weight of the criticism against police
- Leaving their families each day and not knowing what they will face in the field
- Observing little progress in the communities they policed. They noted that arrests did not seem to curb the violence or illegal activity and it was tough watching the vicious cycle play out each day.

The young men were then asked to share the hardest part of being black in America. Some shared the following:

- Negative stereotypes
- Being misunderstood by people, especially police, whom they felt were out to get them. One young man was very adamant that he would never call the police because he knew they were crooked. He later shared that his brother was in jail for a charge he felt was erroneous
- Lack of positive role models
- Unsure of the future

Each side learned valuable insights on the other's perspectives. The officers and youth were paired off and encouraged to continue to talk and learn more about each other on a personal level. They were asked to engage in the following conversation starters:

- Describe yourself; your likes and dislikes
- What in your life is most important to you?
- What is the importance of authority and rules in your life?
- What is the hardest part of your daily life/career?
- What should someone know about you before they judge you?

During this exercise, it was evident that the young men were nervous being paired up with an officer. The officers attempted to warm them up to the questions. It was unclear if many of the young men had difficulty holding a conversation with adults in general or just police officers. Because of the one-sided energy in the small groups, the groups quickly began to turn into officers encouraging and mentoring the young men. Although this was not the purpose, the conversations were very positive and seemed to show the young men that the officers had a genuine concern for them. There was a fine line here because the desire was to keep the interactions focused on mutual discussion

instead of attempting to fix one side over the other. Some conversations sounded combative, where the officer was scolding the youth. The researcher quickly intervened and put the conversation back on track. Eventually most groups began to share some valuable insights regarding their personal lives. It was great to hear much of the positive hopes and dreams of both officers and students.

The session concluded with explanations for the next day's session. At the alternative school site, the officers and young men were invited to stay and eat a lunch together. Some of the officers did not eat but they stayed and talked a little longer with the young men. At the Dougherty High School site, they were encouraged to talk afterward and ask additional questions. This activity created an organic nature to the session and helped further the purpose of restoring trust.

Session II: Integrity

The second session continued where the "Faith" section left off. The idea of this section was to lead to a sustained practice of trust by taking responsibility for one's own personal behavior and overall integrity. In this session, the ideas and characteristics expressed by each participant were challenged and strengthened. The participants read the "Integrity" section together.

In this section, the young men were taught valuable principles about integrity as a young black man in America. The officers were also challenged to strive for better in their training and professional identity. Both sides had a responsibility in contributing to how they are perceived. At the same time, this should remind us that not everyone is who we may perceive them to be.

The group was asked: how do we move past a history of police distrust in the black community? In other words, what would it take for the young men to trust the police and for the police to trust young Black men? They were asked to think generally and locally.

The responses from the young men included:

- more activities
- positive interactions with police officers
- curbing vindictive and controlling behavior
- to be more tolerant and understanding

The officer's responses included:

- repairing the Black male image and how young men dress. i.e. sagging pants, hanging with the wrong crowd, engaging in reckless behavior
- cutting the attitude when police stops them, quelling the overt disrespect

Notably neither side expressed what they could do to aid in the problem of trust.

This point was revealed to them since the section dealt with personal integrity. One can hope another's behavior changes, but one really only has control over his or her own actions. This helped them to see that a large part of the solution remained on each of them.

The police officers met together in one group and the young men met in a separate group. In these groups, they were asked to discuss ways in which they could develop integrity in their own lives that spill over in their work. They were asked, "How will you build your integrity and seek to encourage the integrity of those around you?"

After 10-15 minutes of dialogue, they were asked to come back to the large group. At the alternative school, volunteers were asked to sit in the middle of the group circle one at a time. Each participant was handed a clean sheet of paper and asked to give feedback on his or her perception of the person in the middle. The volunteers were hesitant at first but soon began to participate. As perceptions were voiced to the individual in the center, it allowed him or her to see how he or she is viewed by others and learn more about personal integrity. The participants mostly gave very affirming statements about the individuals; however, some were blunt and really took the exercise seriously.

This exercise allowed for great discussion about perception. The group expressed how eye-opening, yet how tough it was to hear others' feedback about them. However, in the future it seemed it would have been more valuable to do this exercise prior to the dialogue about personal integrity. It also would help to pair people off and do a rotating system where their feedback was not so public. It made some uncomfortable to be in the spotlight and analyzed by so many at once.

At Dougherty High School, the officers and students stood in a line facing each other. Officers were on one side and the youth on the other. The young men had to look the officers in their eyes and repeat a litany response, which they said in unison.

- **Researcher:** Who are you?
- **Students:** I am [insert name].
- **Researcher:** Who are your people?
- **Students:** I am the son of [insert family or father's name].
- **Researcher:** Where are you from?

- **Students:** My roots are in Africa.
- **Researcher:** Why are you powerful?
- **Students:** I am a man. We are wise. We are noble. We are Black.

The officers were instructed to do the same.

- **Researcher:** Who are you?
- **Officers:** I am [insert name].
- **Researcher:** What department do you represent?
- **Officers:** [States their department]
- **Researcher:** What is your rank?
- **Officers:** [States rank]
- **Researcher:** What is your duty?
- **Officers:** To serve and protect you.

This exercise was very empowering and was used to give a sense of pride and responsibility. The outcome was to have each participant reflect on their personal identity and integrity. After the exercise, the officers and students shook hands and encouraged each other.

The session concluded with the participants discussing how they can respect each other while still holding each other accountable to higher standards. They were instructed to reflect on this individually. The police officers shared they could be more transparent with the community, willing to openly call out those who have done wrong, and spend more time doing community policing. The young men shared they could be more open to critique and try to listen more to authority figures. They were asked to define what

“higher standards” meant to them. Many answered that it meant living up to what their mother raised them to be. When the time was up, the conversations continued.

Session III: Training

This section discussed the type of training needed for police and young Black men for an effective community of trust to be realized. The session began with the role-play activities.

The first role-play involved two friends riding in a car playing loud music. We had two young men volunteer and sit in our imaginary car located in the middle of the classroom. One of the officers was to act as if he pulled up beside them at a traffic stop. The scene would continue as they would imagine it would. As they began to act out the scenario we would pause the scene and discuss what just happened and why it happened.

In this scene, the boys were told to refuse to turn down the music. The officers were instructed to act out what they would do in this instance. The officers said they would first politely motion to them to turn the music down and if they did not they would pull them over. In the next scene, the officer is at the driver’s window asking for license and registration. The boys were taught to place their hands on the steering wheel or dashboard as the officer approached. Then they were instructed to audibly explain to the officer what they were about to do with their hands in reaching for their wallet. The boys were asked to redo this part of the role play to rehearse the words they would say and the speed at which they should reach for the wallet. It was also suggested that they have their personal documents out prior to the officer approaching the window to avoid reaching for anything at all.

There was a twist to the scenario as the driver of the car explained the car was not his, but his grandmother's car. The passenger then was instructed to jump out the car and run. At this point in the scenario, we discussed what the officer was trained to do. For the driver, he would ask for the grandmother's number and verify the story. For the friend running, he would call for backup and try to apprehend the friend. The on-looking students had some different opinions about how the scene should play out. Some felt the passenger should be allowed to leave. The officers expressed how running is perceived and when one is pulled over one must follow the instructions of the officer. They discussed how important it is for both sides to speak and act calmly.

They talked about how decisions are made in split seconds and how important training and a positive mindset plays in making these choices. Ultimately, they discussed that not every officer or citizen is going to react the same way, but will do all that is possible to preserve life and make it home.

The next role-play involved a stop and frisk scenario. The young man was at a party in the park and was walking home when the police officer approached him. The young man explained that he would not be afraid if this happened in real life. However, in the course of the role-play it was evident that the young man was scared. The officer really pressed him and the young man answered every question. We paused and explained that the young man was not obligated to answer all the questions. There was a little back and forth with the officers and the researcher about this point. They were referred to Georgia law, which states that the citizen has the right to remain silent. Yet, there are certain situations that require one to give the officer personal information.

The ACLU provides a break-down of Georgia law for police encounters. This document was distributed and discussed to explain in further detail the difference between reasonable suspicion and probable cause. The students began to wonder whether or not they had to answer interrogations if an officer stopped them. The officers told the boys they were obligated to answer their questions, but the ACLU document stated that in most cases, they did not have to speak to the officers. This was a crucial moment, as they were able to see clearly the difference of perceptions depending on which side of the law you were looking.

Another discussion developed in regard to the position of the boy's hands and whether they should be behind his back or in front. Some said it was better behind so that it would not appear he was going to use his hands against the officer. Then others said his hands should be in front so the officer would know he had nothing behind his back. Finally, it was decided that if the officer had already frisked him, then he should place his hands behind. If the officer had not frisked him, he should place his arms in front with hands open to show he had nothing and was not ready to fight. This conversation outlined just how difficult it can be for a young Black youth to interact with police. This is already a stressful situation without adding the number of safety procedures one must remember. The officer has his own perceptions, and in acting out of fear, can easily associate this young Black youth with a negative encounter he had with another Black male from a previous day.

From here, the group began to discuss other de-escalation tactics that police could use. The boys explained how hard it is to remember everything they should or should not do. They felt it rested more on the professional officers to remain calm and to explain

when their behavior made the officer nervous. The officers felt that the boys should strive to stay away from trouble and not associate with or around people that were involved in trouble. The boys noted it was hard to avoid negative perceptions based on the neighborhoods in which they lived. Poverty makes it difficult for young men to avoid criminal activity and association. Simply walking down a certain block could appear as if they were involved in trouble when they may just live on that street. It was agreed that these scenarios are difficult, but with calm spirits there can be positive outcomes.

Session IV: Conclusion

The final session was used to review the past three sessions. The participants divided into groups to schedule time to engage in their worldview activities they had previously decided upon. They were invited to hear stories about other communities that had found ways to build better relationships between police and young Black men. They explored the advances of the Salt Lake City Police Department, which found ways to de-escalate situations and avoid fatalities for much of the year.

They concluded with a discussion on community policing and which tactics they will continue after the program. They were asked the following:

- How valuable was this model to help understand community policing?
- What does this look like?
- How will we make this a reality?
- Where do we go from here?

The last activity divided the participants into three groups. Each group was given a 24-piece puzzle and instructed to pour the pieces on the table in front of them. They were challenged to complete the puzzle before the other groups. The first group to

complete the puzzle in its entirety would be declared the winner. The catch, however, was that each group had one piece that did not belong to their puzzle. In order for any group to win, they had to ask the other group for their missing puzzle piece. In the end, one group was declared the winner, while one group never finished and no one came to their aid. The activity ended with laughter and cheers as they figured out where their missing piece was located.

This activity taught that in order for the community to succeed, we must work together. Everyone has value, and is needed to complete the puzzle of life. They learned that instead of only being concerned about their own success, they could help others succeed by offering their talents and knowledge. They also learned the necessity of showing concern for those who are not succeeding, and doing what is needed to assist those who need additional help. It was a great way to conclude on a fun note and leave one last educational nugget.

After a total of nine hours of interaction, the dialogical encounter concluded with encouragement, appreciation, and optimism (Table 1). The post-surveys were distributed and completed by each participant. They were reminded to place the same number from their pre-survey on top of the post-survey page. Each participant was thanked and given a gift card in appreciation. They were also invited to attend a special service at the Emanuel Seventh-day Adventist Church to celebrate the experience, encourage the young men, and appreciate the police officers.

Table 1

Intervention time schedule

	Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4	Day 5
Subject	Interviews	Session I	Session II	Session III	Session IV
Time	1.5 Hrs	2.0 Hrs	1.5 Hrs	2.0 Hrs	2.0 Hrs

Note: Hrs = number of hours

Conclusion

After concluding the F.I.T. intervention program, most participants shared positive verbal affirmation and feedback. The pre- and post-surveys helped discover whether perceptions were changed. Based on the dialogue and activities, it was clear that perceptions were at least challenged. The young Black men were able to engage with some very positive police officers who truly had an interest and desire to see the young men succeed. Many of the young men expressed their relief in meeting officers who seemed to care about them. They even stated they now believed not every officer was bad.

The intervention flowed well, but there are some areas that could have been done differently. At least three observations were made: (a) Identify the ideal location for each session earlier on. Each session required different types of spaces. The space in which one uses can have a direct impact on the comprehension of the experience. For example,

during at least one session, the intervention was held in a large auditorium with terrible acoustics, which made it hard to hear and concentrate. (b) The moderator should bring at least one assistant to help in leading discussions, distributing the documents, or other areas of need. (c) Conducting additional sessions would be valuable to determine if perception change is directly related to the number of officers involved, time spent together, or any other array of factors. (d) Conducting the intervention in a city with a more diverse police force to survey a variety of cultural perceptions.

A few of the positive aspects of the program included the *F.I.T. Manual*, the intentional interactions, and the content. The *F.I.T. Manual* gathered some of the pertinent solutions found in the literature and presented the information in an educational manner. Through the dialogue, intentional interactions, exercises, and educational training, the participants received a wide spectrum of information. The manual helped to reinforce the main points. The main points discussed from the previous session were reiterated in other sessions. The participants were able to repeat the main points that they had learned. The information proved to be valuable and memorable.

CHAPTER 6

PROJECT EVALUATION AND LEARNINGS

Summary of the Project

This project had the objective to develop, test and employ a training intervention model that facilitated a community of trust between law enforcement officers and Black American youth. This would take place through the developing and administering of the Faith, Integrity, and Training intervention manual as shared in the Appendix. This manual used during the intervention included intentional interactions, conversations, activities, training, and team building exercises.

The interventions included over 24 young Black men and 14 police officers from Dougherty County. The interventions took place at two separate locations and each intervention took place over a three-week period. At the South Georgia Achievement Center, there were seven young Black men and four officers who took the pre- and post-survey. At the Dougherty High School there were 17 young Black men and 10 officers who took the pre- and post-survey. Along with the intervention, the participants were encouraged to interact outside of the prescribed program time. Not every officer and student completed the intervention due to outside circumstances.

The intervention, through the F.I.T. intervention manual, included topics such as learning how to trust, victim-centered policing, community policing, developing personal integrity, and best police and young Black men interaction tactics. The knowledge acquired during these sessions fostered valuable discussion and positive interactions. The

tone of the group was more positive when the post-survey was administered. Most of the participants made an effort to verbally express their enjoyment of the program and wished it could continue. In the Dougherty High School, there are plans to implement the project on a much larger scale.

Description of the Evaluation Method

This study uses a mixed methods approach of evaluation through administering pre-survey and post-survey questionnaires, observations, and interviews. The instruments used were adopted from the *Center for Public Safety Initiatives entitled Teen Empowerment's Youth Police Dialogues*. In addition, the researcher recorded notes of observations during the implementation of the F.I.T. manual during the intervention sessions. These observations, along with the analysis of the questionnaires will be presented in this chapter.

Data Interpretation

The initial tone of the participants in the program was very tense. The conversations and interactions were rigid. Everyone seemed unsure as to what to expect. Through the interviews with the young Black men and the results from the pre-surveys revealed that there were some poor perceptions towards police. However, the demeanor and attitude of the young men appeared to change throughout the intervention. The conversations improved and there was a better willingness to get involved. This was best observed during the role-playing and the community building activities.

The most notable moments for perception change seemed to occur in the small groups, when police officers and the young men were able to talk on a more intentional level. One young man was heard saying that he did not like police but that the police in

the program were alright with him. Such a statement revealed how his general perception of police may not have changed much, but his specific perception of local police did change.

In Table 2, a significant perception change occurred when the young men were asked whether they trust the police. While administering the surveys, they were instructed to answer the survey according to their knowledge of the police in the intervention. The table shows a significant change from “disagree” to a “neutral” response, which moves their perception closer towards trust. The intervention seemed to help move their perceptions towards trust.

Table 2

I Trust the Police

Pre-Survey	Post-Survey	t	df	p
Mean	Mean			
2.38	3.31	4.382	12	.001*

*Note. * = significant change at .005 level*

Another significant area of change appeared in the perception that most officers try to understand what young Black men are going through (Table 3). The perception began as “neutral” but after the intervention, the perception changed towards “agree.”

Table 3

Most Police Officers try to Understand What we are Going Through

Pre-Survey	Post-Survey	t	df	p
Mean	Mean			
3.0	4.0	3.375	13	.005*

*Note. * = significant change at .005 level*

Through experiences with the young men, the police were able to observe the effectiveness of community policing. Many officers complimented the program and mentioned it should be done in more cities. The officers shared that they did not realize the magnitude of some mistrust held by many of the young men. In the “Integrity” session it was discovered that there are no city programs like this project that allow officers to learn and employ community policing tactics. In many cases, it sounded like community policing is not effectively being taught. Many of the officers had not heard of the recent information on updated community policing tactics. Table 4 reveals, on the scale of 1-5, that they “strongly agree” that police and young Black men could work together.

Table 4

Young Black Men and Police Can Work Together

Pre-Survey	Post-Survey	t	df	p
Mean	Mean			
4.67	4.67	.000	8	1.000

Unfortunately, the data failed to capture any significant perception change in the area of trust by the officers. Table 5 showed an average “neutral” response when asked about their trust towards young Black men in both the pre- and post- surveys. While the data does not reveal this change, the comments written on their surveys and observations made during the intervention would suggest that some progress had been made. In the post-survey, one described the young men as being “smart,” one felt the young men “respect the police,” another expressed enjoying the dialogue, and another shared a desire to learn more about the needs of young Black men.

Table 5

In General, Albany Police Officers Trust Young Black Men.

Pre-Survey	Post-Survey	t	df	p
Mean	Mean			
3.33	3.33	.000	8	1.000

At the conclusion of the project, it was evident that the participants had learned valuable information. The interactions became more fluid, conversations better, and the tension had significantly subsided. It was observed that most of the participants enjoyed the program and wanted to do their part to further repair the relationship between police and young Black men.

Conclusions Drawn From the Data

The data revealed a few significant areas of perception change occurring among the young Black men in how they view police officers. When asked to “circle the words that you think describe police officers in your community,” there were fairly significant increases for the words nice, intelligent, respectful, strong, understanding, and a very significant increase for the word fair (Table 6). This is interesting because when given the same set of words in the pre- and post-survey, more students chose these positive words. In similar fashion, during the post-survey, negative words such as “harmful” and

“uncaring” saw a decrease. These findings reflected the interpretation of the data, which revealed a significant increase in young Black men’s trust towards police officers after the intervention (Table 2).

Table 6

Percentage of Young Black Men Circling the Word “Fair” to Describe Local Police

Pre-Survey %	Post-Survey %	Total %	t	df	p
11%	78%	66.7%	4.000	8	.004*

*Note. * = significant change at .005 level*

The police officer data revealed a fairly positive opinion towards young Black men throughout the intervention. While there were no significant changes in their perception, the officers’ surveys revealed most answers were “Neutral,” “Agree,” or “Strongly Agree.” So, while their initial perceptions showed insignificant change, they generally trusted young Black men.

When asked about their opinion of how young Black men trusted them, they shared an initial 2.89 negative response on a scale of 1-5 (Table 7). The perception the officers shared towards how young Black men trust them failed to match the actual feelings shown by the men. The officers also failed to notice their part in increasing the

youth perception from a 3.0 towards a 4.0 (Table 3). This revealed how much influence the officers interacting with the youth actually had on the young men. Many officers may not realize the significance and benefits of participating in this type of intervention can have on young Black men.

Table 7

Young Black men in Albany Trust the Police

Pre-Survey	Post-Survey	t	df	p
Mean	Mean			
2.89	3.11	.686	8	.512

Outcomes of the Intervention

The intervention concluded in a positive way. The police officers expressed the willingness and desire to be involved in the intervention again. The county Sheriff was impressed by the project and gave his endorsement to the nearby county's sheriff department. The plan is to introduce the F.I.T. intervention program to Lee County, Georgia. The police officers who participated in the intervention expressed interest in learning more about victim-centered policing. The officers were able to engage in community policing and speak to the young men in an encouraging way. This type of response revealed the effectiveness and willingness for the police to be intentional about

community policing. It also proved to be a way in being pro-active in curbing police misconduct in the Dougherty County area.

The young men shared their appreciation of the information they received. They shared that they did not know much of the history and statistics that were taught. The session on “faith” educated them on many of the issues of policing happening around the country. Many of the youth had not heard of many of the cases and did not realize the seriousness of the situation. They left feeling personally empowered as Black men. They expressed feeling more knowledgeable about how to conduct themselves when being stopped by police. They were able to see the police officers who participated showing concern for their well-being. Because many of the police officers were also Black, the youth were able to receive a level of mentorship from men and women that could see themselves in the young men. Oftentimes, the stereotype is that Black police officers are “sell outs” because they are working for the system of oppression. This intervention seemed to change that perception for the young men.

The schools enjoyed the program and expressed their desire to have the program implemented again for a longer period of time and to a greater number of students. There are plans to conduct a men’s seminar, where the church would be involved again on a larger scale. The church was able to play a role in police officers and young Black men interacting in a productive manner. Through this intervention, the church helped promote community building through restorative justice. This showed an example of Christ to the participants that welcomed the Seventh-day Adventist Church’s leading in this intervention project. Initiatives such as this allow the church to position themselves in the

lives of the community by demonstrating biblical justice and emulating the actions of Christ.

Final Conclusion

This project conducted an intervention that found significant success in fostering community trust between police officers and young Black men. The data revealed significant perception change among the young men and their trust towards police. The data revealed a positive trust local Dougherty County police have towards young Black men. The data did not suggest significant changes in perception by the police officers. However, the police stated verbally and in written form their increased desire to engage in community policing after the intervention. The project successfully educated the participants on the history of the problem, the solutions found in the research, effective policing tactics, and crucial training based on Georgia law in knowing your rights. The project implemented an intervention centered around restorative justice that led to impactful relationships and community peace.

Recommendations

The F.I.T. intervention manual program should be implemented again with additional time given for the sessions and entire length of the program. It would be interesting to observe if additional time would render greater perception change by the young men towards trusting police. It would also be able to measure any perception changes that may arise in police over a longer period of an intervention. The police officers could benefit from going through and reading the entire DOJ and other reports that go into further detail on community and victim-centered policing. With additional

time, more time could be spent educating police and youth separately and then bringing them together for dialogue.

While the church is located in a very monolithic community, with over 70% of residents being African-American, the project would do well to be implemented in a more diverse city. Also, possibly hosting the intervention at the church would give further exposure and promote additional spiritual applications.

A Final Word

One may question if the intervention went far enough and if there are other solutions that could be used to create a community of trust between police and young Black men. The hope is that the intervention will serve as a launching pad towards more lasting changes. Churches should gather to create spaces for racial reconciliation and find ways to advocate for those to whom the system is doing harm. In this case, Christians can use their power to seek to change or add laws that encourage better policing tactics. This intervention project is beneficial because it encourages and invokes meaningful conversation on a highly controversial topic. This project can serve as a model for how we should interact. Hopefully, the statistics will begin to show a decrease in the disproportionate mistreatment by police towards young Black men. Hopefully, this work will inspire others to continue the work of restorative justice and seek inroads towards additional tools that create communities of trust between law enforcement officers and young Black men.

APPENDIX A

Letters

Request Note for Teachers

Emanuel Seventh-day Adventist Church

1524 E. Broad St. Albany GA

Ms. Cassandra Cromer,

Can you assist in recommending students to participate in my doctoral research project?

The research is entitled; A dialogical encounter between young Black men and the Police in Dougherty County: towards building community trust. The objective of this project is to develop, test and employ a training intervention model that facilitates healthy relationship development between law enforcement officers and Black American youth.

The training intervention manual to be used is titled “Faith Integrity Training” (F.I.T.), created and conducted by Pastor Joshua Nelson, the program moderator. A copy of the document containing the content to be used during the intervention is attached.

Please select 10-15 willing participants who classify themselves as an African American male between the ages of 13 and 18. They should express some form of negative or misperception towards the police. They should also be willing to provide verbal and signed consent from their parents. Each of the participants will be given a gift card as an appreciation for their time.

For any additional questions please call Joshua Nelson, 2096051326.

Sincerely,

Joshua Nelson
Pastor

Request Note for Police Officers

Emanuel Seventh-day Adventist Church

1524 E. Broad St. Albany GA

Chief Conley*,

Can you assist in recommending officers to participate in my doctoral research project?

The research is entitled; A dialogical encounter between young Black men and the Police in Dougherty County: towards building community trust. The objective of this project is to develop, test and employ a training intervention model to be used within the church, that facilitates healthy relationship development between law enforcement officers and Black American youth.

The training intervention manual to be used is titled “Faith Integrity Training” (F.I.T.), created and conducted by Pastor Joshua Nelson, the program moderator. A copy of the document containing the content to be used during the intervention is attached.

The officers you select must be willing participants, give verbal and signed consent, and be willing to attend during the lunch period of the *South Georgia Achievement Center* school. They should be willing to complete the program which will last three weeks, with two sessions each week. The officers selected can come from various racial makeups, and have an interest in community policing tactics. They should be officers who want to improve their perception of young males in the African American community. Lunch will be provided during each session and a gift card will be given as an appreciation for their time upon the completion of the program.

For any additional questions please call Joshua Nelson, 2096051326.

Sincerely,

Joshua Nelson

Pastor

*An identical letter was sent to each respective chief of all four law enforcement departments included in the study.

Copy of Email from Dr. John Klofas, the director of center for public safety initiatives

Pastor Nelson,

I am sorry for the delay in getting back to you. The survey you reference was only published through the report you found. Of course, you may use that any way you wish. We have also done some other work on police-community relations that may interest you. Those papers can be found on our webpage at www.rit.edu/cpsi - under the heading our work. Below are the links to the specific papers. I have included a quarterly report of the project, additional project reports are also on our site- under working papers

http://www.rit.edu/cla/criminaljustice/sites/rit.edu.cla.criminaljustice/files/docs/WorkingPapers/2017/CommViews-ProceduralJustice-final_4.11.17.pdf

<http://www.rit.edu/cla/criminaljustice/sites/rit.edu.cla.criminaljustice/files/docs/WorkingPapers/2017/Comm%20Views%20-%20Methodology%20-%20final%20-%204.11.17.pdf>

<http://www.rit.edu/cla/criminaljustice/sites/rit.edu.cla.criminaljustice/files/docs/WorkingPapers/2016/Quarter4%20Report%20final.pdf>

Please let me know if we can do anything else.

John

John M. Klofas, Ph.D.

Professor, Department of Criminal Justice and
Director, Center for Public Safety Initiatives at RIT
Rochester Institute of Technology
93 Lomb Drive
Rochester, NY 14623
585-475-2423
www.rit.edu/cpsi

"No research without action and, no action without research." Kurt Lewin

South Georgia Regional Achievement Center Administration Approval



SOUTH GEORGIA REGIONAL ACHIEVEMENT CENTER

MARCEL LOVING, PRINCIPAL DAWN BROWN, ASST. PRINCIPAL RONALD GADSON, ASST. PRINCIPAL

07/31/2017

Institutional Review Board
Andrews University
4150 Administrative Drive, Room 322
Berrien Springs, MI 49104-0355

To Whom It May Concern:

We consent to allow Joshua Nelson to conduct his Faith Integrity Training (F.I.T.) program in conjunction with his doctorate of ministry research project titled: A ministry model seeking justice and restoring trust among young Black males and law enforcement in Dougherty County.

Marcel Loving, Principal

07/31/17
07/31/2017

1001 West Highland Avenue

Albany, Georgia 31701

Phone: 229.431.1218

Fax 229.431.3478

Dougherty High School Administration Approval



Mr. Eddie Johnson
Principal

Dougherty Comprehensive High School

1800 Pearce Avenue
Albany, Georgia 31705

Telephone 229.431.3310
FAX 229.431.3482
www.docoschools.org/doughertyhigh

Administrators:

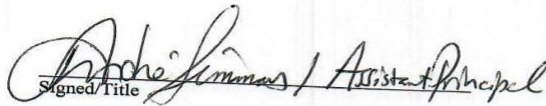
Dr. Lakeisha Hudson
Mr. Fredrick Thomas
Mrs. Audrey Brown
Mr. Andre Simmons

Institutional Review Board
Andrews University
4150 Administrative Drive, Room 322
Berrien Springs, MI 49104-0355

To Whom It May Concern:

Dougherty Comprehensive High School is participating with Joshua Nelson, a candidate for a Doctorate of Ministry, in a program called "Faith Integrity Training". This research project is called: A ministry model seeking justice and restoring trust among young black males and law enforcement in Dougherty County. We have given Mr. Nelson permission to provide this program to our students with proper documentation and consent.

Students participate with parental consent for four sessions during the day at the high school. A member of the Counseling team sits in on all sessions to be aware of outcomes and any issues.


Signed/Title

8/27/2018
Date

APPENDIX B

Questionnaires

Youth Pre-Survey

Part of us doing the DIALOGICAL ENCOUNTER involves research questions that can help us see what participants learned and if the project was successful overall. Throughout your participation in this project, we will ask that you complete surveys to help with this goal. The surveys are voluntary, and you can choose to skip questions if you wish. However we strongly encourage you to complete the survey fully and thoughtfully. This will help us show our community how you feel, what you've learned, and how to do projects like this in other communities. The results of the survey will also be fed back to us so that we can make improvements based on your thoughts and suggestions.

We're giving you some time now to answer this first survey. The surveys are anonymous, so please never write your name on the surveys. Your name or identity will never be attached to your answers. The moderator will privately give you a randomly selected three digit number which you will place on the top right corner of each survey page. Please do this before completing the survey. This number will NOT be linked to your name but will be used to compare responses in the post survey. Please complete both sides of this page, and return it to the moderator.

Note: At times, "YBM" will be used to abbreviate the phrase "Young Black men"

DIALOGICAL ENCOUNTER
YOUTH Pre-Survey

RATE HOW MUCH YOU AGREE OR DISAGREE WITH THE FOLLOWING STATEMENTS (CIRCLE A NUMBER)

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
I want to work with other young-men to improve police relations.	5	4	3	2	1
Young Black men and police can work together effectively to help the community.	5	4	3	2	1
I am excited about working with police officers to improve young black men-police relations.	5	4	3	2	1
Most police officers try to understand what young black men are going through.	5	4	3	2	1
I trust the police.	5	4	3	2	1
When they respond to a scene or area, police officers handle the situation well.	5	4	3	2	1
In general, young black men trust the police.	5	4	3	2	1
In general, I feel safe around police officers.	5	4	3	2	1
Young Black men in Albany,GA respect the police.	5	4	3	2	1
Most police officers want to help the community.	5	4	3	2	1
Most police officers trust Young Black men.	5	4	3	2	1
The way I treat police officers influences how my peers act towards police officers.	5	4	3	2	1
I respect the police.	5	4	3	2	1
If I or someone I knew was in immediate danger of being hurt, I would approach a police officer for help if I saw one in the area.	5	4	3	2	1
Police officers respect the Young Black men in Albany, GA.	5	4	3	2	1
Relations between Young Black men and police can be improved.	5	4	3	2	1
If my friend was disrespecting a police officer, I would encourage him or her to act differently.	5	4	3	2	1

PLEASE ANSWER THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS:

- 1. Describe “respect” and what it means to you.**
- 2. Why do you want to participate in this Young Black men and Police Intervention? This could be what you want to share, learn, or accomplish, what you find interesting about it, etc.**

DIALOGICAL ENCOUNTER
YOUTH Pre-Survey

CIRCLE A NUMBER TO ANSWER THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS.

	Always	Most of the time	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
How often have your personal interactions with police officers been positive?	5	4	3	2	1
How often have your personal interactions with police officers been negative?	5	4	3	2	1
How often have your friends or family members had positive interactions with police?	5	4	3	2	1
How often have your friends or family members had negative interactions with police?	5	4	3	2	1

Circle the words that you think describe police officers in your community.

Fair Authority Mean Friendly Dedicated Harmful Protecting Respectable Nice
 Intimidating Anxious Bored Brave Disrespectful Uncaring Stressed Intelligent
 Respectful Fear-provoking Unfriendly Rude Compassionate Controlling Arrogant
 Helpful Vulnerable Destructive Overworked Trustworthy Power Strangers Caring
 Weak Strong Resilient Stupid Neighbors Out-of-touch Violent Understanding

Circle the words below that you think describe “justice.”

Accountability Forgiveness Blame Fairness Injustice Jail Payback Misunderstanding
 Equality Race Punishment Safety Police Respect Authority Inequality
 Powerless Arrest Healing Court Peace In trouble

PLEASE ANSWER THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS:

1. What makes you willing or able to share your opinions and feelings in this process?
2. Why are you willing to listen to the opinions and feelings of police officers?

Officer Pre-Survey

Part of us doing the DIALOGICAL ENCOUNTER involves research questions that can help us see what participants learned and if the project was successful overall. Throughout your participation in this project, we will ask that you complete surveys to help with this goal. The surveys are voluntary, and you can choose to skip questions if you wish. However we strongly encourage you to complete the survey fully and thoughtfully. This will help us make this program better, show, what you've learned, and how to do projects like this in other communities.

We're giving you some time now to answer this first survey. The surveys are anonymous, so please never write your name on the surveys. Your name or identity will never be attached to your answers. The moderator will privately give you a randomly selected three digit number which you will place on the top right corner of each survey page. Please do this before completing the survey. This number will NOT be linked to your name but will be used to compare responses in the post survey. Please complete both sides of this page, and return it to the moderator.

Note: At times, "YBM" will be used to abbreviate the phrase "Young Black men"

**DIALOGICAL ENCOUNTER
OFFICER Pre-Survey**

RATE HOW MUCH YOU AGREE OR DISAGREE WITH THE FOLLOWING STATEMENTS (CIRCLE A NUMBER)

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
I want to work with Albany young Black men to improve youth-police relations.	5	4	3	2	1
I want to work with other Officers to improve relations.	5	4	3	2	1
I trust young Black men in Albany, GA.	5	4	3	2	1
In general, Albany police officers trust young Black men.	5	4	3	2	1
As a police officer, I try to understand what young Black men are going through.	5	4	3	2	1
In general, I feel safe and comfortable dealing with young Black men.	5	4	3	2	1
Young Black men in Albany respect the police.	5	4	3	2	1
Young Black men in Albany trust the police.	5	4	3	2	1
I respect young Black men in Albany.	5	4	3	2	1
Police officers respect the young Black men in Albany.	5	4	3	2	1
Relations between young Black men and police can be improved.	5	4	3	2	1
I go out of my way to help young Black men with their problems, even if it's not technically part of my job.	5	4	3	2	1
Young Black men and police can work together effectively to help the community.	5	4	3	2	1
Most police officers want to help the community.	5	4	3	2	1
Young Black men in Albany want to make their community better.	5	4	3	2	1
When responding to a call or scene, police officers handle the situation to the best of their ability.	5	4	3	2	1
If one of my fellow officers were disrespecting a young Black man, I would encourage him/her to act differently.	5	4	3	2	1
The way I treat young Black men influences how my fellow officers treat young Black men.	5	4	3	2	1

PLEASE ANSWER THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS:

1. Describe "respect" and what it means to you.
2. Why do you want to participate in the Young Black men and Police Intervention? This could be what you want to share, learn, or accomplish, what you find interesting about it, etc.

**DIALOGICAL ENCOUNTER
OFFICER Pre-Survey**

CIRCLE A NUMBER TO ANSWER THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS.

	Always	Most of the time	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
How often have your own professional interactions with young Black men been positive?	5	4	3	2	1
How often have your own professional interactions with young Black men been negative?	5	4	3	2	1
To your knowledge, how often have your fellow officers had positive interactions with young Black men in Albany?	5	4	3	2	1
To your knowledge, how often have your fellow officers had negative interactions with young Black men in Albany?	5	4	3	2	1

Circle the words that you think describe youth in Albany.

Courteous	Mean	Friendly	Rude	Harmful	Bored	Respectable	Annoying	Grudge
Intimidating	Anxious	Cooperative	Brave	Disrespectful	Uncaring	Stressed	Intelligent	
Respectful	Dangerous	Unfriendly	Outspoken	Scared	Strangers	Arrogant	Weak	Engaged
Helpful	Vulnerable	Destructive	Fearless	Compassionate	Caring	Uncooperative	Forgiving	
Strong	Resilient	Dumb	Neighbors	Out-of-touch	Violent	Understanding	Frustrating	

Circle the words below that you think describe “justice.”

Accountability	Forgiveness	Blame	Fairness	Injustice	Jail	Payback	Misunderstanding
Equality	Race	Punishment	Safety	Police	Respect	Authority	Inequality
	Powerless	Arrest	Healing	Court	Peace	In trouble	

PLEASE ANSWER THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS:

1. What makes you willing or able to share your opinions and feelings in this process?
2. Why are you willing to listen to the opinions and feelings of young Black men and other police officers about youth-police relations?
3. Additional Comments:

**DIALOGICAL ENCOUNTER
YOUTH Post-Survey**

RATE HOW MUCH YOU AGREE OR DISAGREE WITH THE FOLLOWING STATEMENTS (CIRCLE A NUMBER)

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
I want to work with other young Black men to improve police relations.	5	4	3	2	1
Young Black men and police can work together effectively to help the community.	5	4	3	2	1
I enjoyed working with police officers to improve youth-police relations.	5	4	3	2	1
Most police officers try to understand what we are going through.	5	4	3	2	1
I trust the police.	5	4	3	2	1
When they respond to a scene or area, police officers handle the situation well.	5	4	3	2	1
In general, young Black men trust the police.	5	4	3	2	1
In general, I feel safe around police officers.	5	4	3	2	1
Youth in Albany respect the police.	5	4	3	2	1
Most police officers want to help the community.	5	4	3	2	1
Most police officers trust young Black men.	5	4	3	2	1
The way I treat police officers influences how my peers act towards police officers.	5	4	3	2	1
I respect the police.	5	4	3	2	1
If I or someone I knew was in immediate danger of being hurt, I would approach a police officer for help, if I saw one in the area.	5	4	3	2	1
Police officers respect the young Black men in Albany.	5	4	3	2	1
Relations between youth and police can be improved.	5	4	3	2	1
If my friend was disrespecting a police officer, I would encourage him or her to act differently.	5	4	3	2	1
I am aware of the challenges faced by police in Albany.	5	4	3	2	1
I will try harder to establish better communication between myself and the police.	5	4	3	2	1
After participating in the youth/police dialogues, I have a better understanding of how police feel.	5	4	3	2	1
I will encourage other youth to participate in youth/police dialogues.	5	4	3	2	1

PLEASE ANSWER THE FOLLOWING QUESTION:

1. What was the most important thing that you got out of your participation in youth/police dialogues?

**DIALOGICAL ENCOUNTER
YOUTH Post-Survey**

CIRCLE A NUMBER TO ANSWER THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS.

	Always	Most of the time	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
How often have your personal interactions with police officers been positive?	5	4	3	2	1
How often have your personal interactions with police officers been negative?	5	4	3	2	1
How often have your friends or family members had positive interactions with police?	5	4	3	2	1
How often have your friends or family members had negative interactions with police?	5	4	3	2	1

Circle the words that you think describe police officers in your community.

Fair Authority Mean Friendly Dedicated Harmful Protecting Respectable Nice
 Intimidating Anxious Bored Brave Disrespectful Uncaring Stressed Intelligent
 Respectful Fear-provoking Unfriendly Rude Compassionate Controlling Arrogant
 Helpful Vulnerable Destructive Overworked Trustworthy Power Strangers Caring
 Weak Strong Resilient Stupid Neighbors Out-of-touch Violent Understanding

Circle the words below that you think describe “justice.”

Accountability Forgiveness Blame Fairness Injustice Jail Payback Misunderstanding
 Equality Race Punishment Safety Police Respect Authority Inequality
 Powerless Arrest Healing Court Peace In trouble

PLEASE ANSWER THE FOLLOWING QUESTION:

1. Describe something new you learned from the police officers participating in the project:
2. Why were you willing to listen to the opinions and feelings of police officers?
3. What was difficult or challenging about the project, and how do you think it can be improved?

DIALOGICAL ENCOUNTER
OFFICER Post-Survey

RATE HOW MUCH YOU AGREE OR DISAGREE WITH THE FOLLOWING STATEMENTS (CIRCLE A NUMBER)

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
I want to work with young Black men to improve police relations.	5	4	3	2	1
I want to work with other officers to improve relations with young Black.	5	4	3	2	1
I trust young Black men in Albany.	5	4	3	2	1
In general, Dougherty police officers trust young Black men.	5	4	3	2	1
As a police officer, I try to understand what youth are going through.	5	4	3	2	1
In general, I feel safe and comfortable dealing with young Black men.	5	4	3	2	1
I believe young Black men respect the police in Albany.	5	4	3	2	1
I believe young Black men trust the police in Albany.	5	4	3	2	1
I respect young Black men in Albany.	5	4	3	2	1
Police officers respect the young Black men in Albany.	5	4	3	2	1
I believe relations between young Black men and police can be improved.	5	4	3	2	1
I go out of my way to help young Black men with their problems, even if it's not technically part of my job.	5	4	3	2	1
Young Black men and police can work together effectively to help the community.	5	4	3	2	1
Most police officers want to help the community.	5	4	3	2	1
Young Black men in Albany want to make their community better.	5	4	3	2	1
If one of my fellow officers were disrespecting a young Black man, I would encourage him/her to act differently.	5	4	3	2	1
The way I treat YBM influences how my fellow officers treat YBM	5	4	3	2	1
I am aware of the challenges faced by young Black men in Albany.	5	4	3	2	1
I will try harder to establish better communication between myself and young Black men.	5	4	3	2	1
After participating in the youth/police dialogues, I have a better understanding of how young Black men feel.	5	4	3	2	1
I will encourage other officers to participate in youth/police dialogues.	5	4	3	2	1

PLEASE ANSWER THE FOLLOWING QUESTION:

1. What was the most important thing that you got out of your participation in the dialogues?
2. What was difficult or challenging about the dialogues, and how do you think it can be improved?

DIALOGICAL ENCOUNTER

OFFICER Post-Survey

CIRCLE A NUMBER TO ANSWER THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS.

	Always	Most of the time	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
How often have your own professional interactions with young Black men in Albany been positive?	5	4	3	2	1
How often have your own professional interactions with young Black men in Albany been negative?	5	4	3	2	1
To your knowledge, how often have your fellow officers had positive interactions with YBM in Albany?	5	4	3	2	1
To your knowledge, how often have your fellow officers had negative interactions with YBM in Albany?	5	4	3	2	1

Circle the words that you think describe youth in Albany.

Courteous Mean Friendly Rude Harmful Bored Respectable Annoying Grudge
 Intimidating Anxious Cooperative Brave Disrespectful Uncaring Stressed Intelligent
 Respectful Dangerous Unfriendly Outspoken Scared Strangers Arrogant Weak Engaged
 Helpful Vulnerable Destructive Fearless Compassionate Caring Uncooperative Forgiving
 Strong Resilient Dumb Neighbors Out-of-touch Violent Understanding Frustrating

Circle the words below that you think describe “justice.”

Accountability Forgiveness Blame Fairness Injustice Jail Payback Misunderstanding
 Equality Race Punishment Safety Police Respect Authority Inequality
 Powerless Arrest Healing Court Peace In trouble

PLEASE ANSWER THE FOLLOWING QUESTION:

- Describe something new you learned from the youth participating in the project:
- Do you think this project could have a broader impact on law enforcement agencies? If so, how? *(Please include any specific ideas you have for how this project can be expanded)*
- Additional Comments:

APPENDIX C

Faith Integrity and Training Intervention Manual

F.I.T.

Faith | Integrity | Training

A community-based program designed
to strengthen relations
between police and young black men.

1 Chronicles 12:8, KJV of the Holy Bible

“And of the Gadites there separated themselves unto David into the hold to the wilderness men of might, and men of war **fit** for the battle, that could handle shield and buckler, whose faces were like the faces of lions, and were as swift as the roes upon the mountains.”

Table of Contents

Founders forward

Description of the model

Part I: Faith – Trust in each another and faith in God

- ❖ The Philando Effect
- ❖ Welcome to my world

Part II: Integrity - Being true to yourself and your purpose

- ❖ Past, Present, Future
- ❖ Community development
- ❖ Be A F.I.T. Man

Part III: Training – Learning how to achieve something better

- ❖ Salt lake tactics
- ❖ Driving while black
- ❖ Operation: make it home – how to behave

Conclusion:

- ❖ Community Policing

Founders Forward

Why This Program?

In the recent years our nations conversation has heightened around the pervading issue of police misconduct and perception in the Black community. In particular, there has been much literature, public forums, and discussions centered on how young Black men are being treated by police and how young Black men behave with police.

This program specifically focusses on young black men developing healthy relationships with local police officers in hopes to gain build a community of trust. The program specifically focuses on developing 1) faith or trust between them and the officers, 2) building integrity for themselves and how they behave when interacting with officers, and 3) training on proper procedures and legal terms when being approached by an officer. We will also address what to do in a situation where one believes an officer is out of line.

This program also focuses on police officers developing healthy relationships with young black men in their community, in hopes to improve community policing relations along with gaining a new perspective on the youth. The program seeks to develop 1) faith or trust between the officer and the youth, 2) build integrity for themselves as officers, and 3) exercises that illustrate and rehearse deescalating various situations with the young men participating.

Ultimately the hope is that with such activity and dialogue, future interactions between those particular officer and those particular youths would lead to positive and improved outcomes.

Power in our Acronym

The F.I.T. program seeks to equip young men and empower police officers with faith, integrity, and training to be people *fit* to face life's battles.

In 1 Chronicles 12:8 of the bible we find the description of these fierce warriors from Gad, the Gadites. These warriors are characterized by the gazelle (faith), the lion (Integrity), and a trained soldier (Training). Their discipline was unmatched as they joined King David's army. This is significant because the Gadites were previously loyal to the house of King Saul. In this biblical game of thrones, Saul and David were enemies till the end. The idea that Gadites would join David, speaks to a repair of relationship and trust that was lacking while Saul still lived. Their ability to connect with their former enemy for the sake of defending their families and values, shows just how *fit* these notorious warriors were in the legacy of the bible.

When I read their story for the first time I felt the strong impression that we need more people in our community who are *fit* like the Gadites to restore the trust in our communities. People who would be willing to put aside their differences and misconceptions to unite for the betterment of their community. We have seen in the recent years the exposed distrust that still stands between our police and communities of color. Notwithstanding a long history of distrust, we desire to move from this into an era of restored trust. Imagine if we developed Gadites on all fronts of our community who could join together by bringing their abilities to create a better community. The F.I.T. model will help raise people of faith and integrity with the proper training to make this a reality.

- Pastor Joshua Nelson, B.A., B.B.A., M.Div

Description of the model

A two week (minimum) interactive program for young black men and local police to engage in community building and training exercises.

Particularly designed to take place in four sessions; Part 1, Part 11, Part 111, and Conclusion.

Procedure:

A survey will be administered prior to the program to be completed by all participants and a survey will be completed by the same individuals upon the completion of the program. The findings will be used to assess the effectiveness of the model.

Officers and youth will meet together for at least an hour during each session and engage in the discussion or activity for that particular session.

Some activities require time outside of the prescribed session times and these can be scheduled at the pleasure of the particular participants. These activities are not required for the completion of this program and is left entirely up to the discretion of the participants and guardians.

A moderator will lead out and read the information and facilitate the instructions.

Participants:

Young Black males ages 13-18 with negative perceptions about the police. All have deemed to have negative perceptions towards the police.

Officers from various racial communities with recommendations from their police chief. Each chief will be given the F.I.T. manual which explains the program. A meeting with the moderator and the chiefs will further explain expectations and the need for officers with negative perceptions or perceived to have negative perceptions towards young Black men.

Participation in this study is completely voluntary. There will be no penalty or loss of benefits entitled to if one decides to cancel my participation in this study. And that there will be no cost for participating in this study.

Part I: Faith

Trust in each other and faith in God

The Philando Effect

The lack of trust towards our servants in blue did not begin with the facebook live on camera video death of Philando Castile. The problem did not arise with the death of Tamir Rice or any other fatal shooting involving an individual of color in the past ten years. However, the multiple on camera accounts, the viral videos, the #blacklivesmatter protests and subsequent critics, the kneeling of Colin Kaepernick, and the recent Trump presidential cries for law and order have highlighted this issue in recent years. The Philando effect was simply the last straw for many mid-line educated blacks who had been fighting hard to regulate the issue to the corners of their tolerant minds.

Only two days after independence day in 2016 our minds were forever changed. Even harder was the blow when it was uncovered how Mr. Castile was an honor roll student, hard worker, kind spirited, and legal owner of a concealed firearm. The onscreen killing of someone who did not carry the characteristics of a criminal caused many blacks to finally start to seriously question their safety in the presence of police. Our off-hand jokes about the “5/0” the “Po Po” or “the fuzz” now began to actually formulate into real unmitigated fear. We began to wake up and wonder if these viral video incidents were not just overblown but actually usual occurrences. Some even called it “open season” and wondered if there was and is an actually sadistic plan to murder young blacks.

The Philando effect is not centered in anger towards police, instead the effect has been fear or even trauma in the Black community. A gut-wrenching fear that this could happen to me but I have no idea what to do about it. The effect was a dichotomy of feelings because on one hand you support and love the police but on the other hand you have this real psychological fear towards what they may do to you. So naturally there develops this love-hate relationship and a lack of trust that resides during any interaction with law enforcement.

Recovering this faith in police is something that both law enforcement agencies and communities of color must take very seriously. In this trust lies the safety and development of the community and officers.

Activity:

For or Against: Break into groups and defend the statement your group is given. You must argue for or against an opinion that you may or may not agree with. This activity is supposed to teach the value of looking at others opinions.

Fishbowl: One person sits in the circle while sharing the issues they have with the other side. This allows for some dialogue and discussion on the issues of the problem.

Discussion:

Partner up and begin to answer the following questions:

Share your story

What has been your perception of the situation between police and young black men?

What was your reaction to the death of Philando Castile?

Do these viral videos help or hurt the ability for police to do their jobs effectively?

What are some solutions to the trauma?

How do we keep from stereotyping either side?

Welcome to my world:

Who we are and where we are from says a lot about our behavior and how we see the world. Police departments united with faith communities across the country have begun to be intentional with developing spaces for positive interaction. From block parties, public forums, sports games, education camps, and even doing service projects together, these have all aided in strengthening relationships between the community and those who police the community. Partially because either side gets to see that the other is not who or what they thought they were. We are often afraid of what we don't know and don't understand. It can be hard to let go of preconceived notions about people because much of our disdain for each other starts with how we

view the world and centers back to our own identity. To tamper with our stereotypes often causes us to question what we know about ourselves.

A key word that helps shift our ideas is “perspective” because it allows each to see the other from their point of view. When you step into someone else’s world they become apart of you. A bond develops that is not easily broken. It allows the boys on the block and the uniformed cop to appear human.

We want to encourage our young black men to dream of being lawyers, doctors, mechanics, and yes even police officers. We want to foster fit young men who see police as defenders and developers of their hoods and streets they live. We want to create an environment where it is the right thing to protect your neighborhood from negative influence. We want to see police officers policing the neighborhoods where they live.

Even though the above is the ideal we still believe the officers who police neighborhoods that are a different class or culture from their own, can still engage in community policing and gain the respect and trust of the residents. Below are a few activities to help move officers towards community policing and help black residents to receive this style of policing.

There are at least five ways we would like you to practice entering into the others world. Choose which two of the first four you will participate in. The fifth one will be provided for the group by the church on a designated day.

1. A ride-along: The officer takes the young man with him for a prescribed period of time to experience police-life.
2. A positive interaction together at school, work, or home: The officer takes on the role of mentor or big brother/sister and steps into the young man’s life for a day.

3. A “how would you react” simulation: An experience where the officer takes the young men to a simulated example of how difficult it can be to react in intense situations.
4. A viewing of the Netflix original documentary “13th”: This will give much insight on the perspectives of black people in this country and why there is so much fear and mistrust.
5. *A dinner hosted by the church*

Discussion:

Tell Your Story – Who are you? Where are you from? What in your life is most important to you?

What is the importance of authority and rules in your life?

What is the hardest part of your daily life/career?

What should someone know about you before they judge you?

Officer: Explain the difficulties of policing the best you can

Student: Explain the difficulties of growing up Black in America the best you can

Activity:

Switch/Watch: Switch roles and mirror the others behaviors. Role play your day and the challenges you face. Switch back and talk about the things that were accurate or inaccurate.

Part II: Integrity

Being true to yourself and your purpose

Below are some discussion starters for the group.

Past, Present, Future

How do we move past a history of police distrust in the black community?

Don't we all want the same things out of life?

Heroes in Blue

How can we **celebrate** the amazing work police do while also holding them accountable?

List some ways to celebrate

List some ways to hold accountable

Community development: creating accountability and reward for those living with integrity

We desperately need to see positive role models flooding our streets and communities of color. We need to see how to be a man and how you deal with stressful situations. The police often times become not only the defenders of law and order but the representation of a responsible adult or male figure. With 1 and 3 black males either incarcerated or with a record

there is a need for men in our communities. Police officer's (male or female) end up playing the fatherly enforcer role that many just never had. The way by which these encounters transpire can create deep impacts.

Some of the laws have been bent against black fathers/men in particular and has removed the much needed father out of the scenario. This crisis has caused even more trouble in our already troubled communities. There must be a way to rehabilitate and release those who have learned their lessons.

We want our police to protect and serve. We also want our residents to protect and serve the police. There must be a mutual respect between each side as we seek to develop our communities. Community development however does require much more than respect. We need jobs, education, better roads, improved living conditions, better healthcare, transportation, opportunities and so much more. These resources will allow for hope filled neighborhoods that are not impacted by desperation that leads to crime and violence.

Is there a way that communities of faith can partner with communities of color and law enforcement to tackle these issues?

What can be done today in a local neighborhood to repair problems?

Is there a lawn that needs to be mowed?

A house that needs to be demolished or properly boarded up?

Is there tutoring or mentoring needed?

Are there roads that need repair?

Is there food lacking in the home?

Is medicine, prescriptions, or extra care needed?

Who are the handicap, mentally disabled, unemployed?

Who are the “at risk youth”?

What afterschool or summer programs are available?

Why are gangs needed? Can they be used for good?

What about the good guys?

There are so many people in the community and in uniform that are showing what integrity means. How do we promote and encourage more of this?

How can we reward and celebrate those who go above and beyond?

Besides the peace of a better community are there any incentives the city can provide?

To Be A Man

Some think that your ability to fight makes you tough. Some think that the more money, influence, or things you possess makes you more powerful. Some think the more you can acquire as quickly and easily makes you smart. Some think that not backing down from an altercation earns you respect. Some think that you gain credibility through popular behavior.

None of these ideas could be further from the truth. In fact the opposite is often true when people look back through history to define a man of integrity.

A man with integrity is someone who first makes himself a better person. Knowledge, Education, and exercise are ways to develop your mind and body. Working an honest job will develop grit and mental toughness. Being able to solve problems and use deductive reasoning are valuable life skills that opens up options and possibilities. Accruing the skills to never give up in the face of obstacles. Learning that there is no such thing as obstacles, that when you have hope there is always another opportunity.

A man with integrity is someone who makes his house a better place to live. Being able to provide for your family in a consistent and non stressful environment is a sign of a true Lion and protector. Never should a man allow another man to take care of his household and family. Responsibility for your children and those who live in your castle is the primary focus of a man. He is the king in his castle and is required to make sure every aspect of his kingdom is working well. Each person who has been entrusted to him by default of his gender and position is looking to him to create a place of safety and security. How he treats his mother, his woman, and his children will relate to others the type of respect he wishes to be shown towards him. How he treats his vehicles, yard, and living area will show his ability to take care of business during a crisis or altercation. These are signs of consistency, commitment, intelligence, and integrity.

A man with integrity is someone who takes care of his neighborhood. Not only is the property value and investment of your own living quarters in jeopardy when those around you do poorly,

but your own safety and security. A man makes those near him and around him better. He doesn't settle for less or allow people to fall while he is around. There should be a blessing for his neighbors for just being near him. Others should want to be better just by looking at him. We also learn that we are not in this life alone, that there are others near us going through the same problems. They have issues with their bosses, their kids, their marriages, their finances, etc. We are in this thing together and can assist each other by being a listening ear, giving good advice, directing to available resources, or lending a hand. We must defend our hood because it is where we live. When people come into our hood they should see that we value even the small bit that we have. The more we value our own property the more we show value in ourselves. And the more we show value in ourselves the more we will begin to believe the reality that we are important, that we are invaluable to the fabric of this nation.

A man with integrity is someone who takes care of his community. Our success, our wealth, our safety, our future is all tied to the health of our community. Jobs come to towns based on the education systems, the safety, the education levels, etc. We must protect ourselves by protecting our community and learn that the problems we face can only be solved through prayer and hard work. We need to be educated to understand how to correct the problems. We need to use our God given right to vote so we have the correct people making decisions that will make us better. We need to be engaged so that our children won't feel the need to resort to acts of desperation and crime that many of us thought was the only way out.

After Reflection: Take a moment to write down some ways you desire to be better in your life. How will you build your integrity and seek to encourage the integrity of those around you?

Activity:

Feedback: Each participant is given a piece of paper and asked to give feedback about various persons in the group. This sheet is given to that person. This is to help participants see how others view them and learn more about their own integrity.

Part III: Training

Learning how to achieve something better

In this section we will spend some time on a few case studies, followed with some discussions in your group.

Salt Lake tactics

Fox News 13 reported on how the police department in Salt Lake City are using de-escalation tactics to save lives. While they haven't particularly noticed a downtick in crime they have gone this year without having to resort to deadly force. Check out the article at

<http://fox13now.com/2017/05/16/deadly-force-or-de-escalation/>

- **How can we incorporate some of these tactics?**
- **How should we respond when we encounter “bad apples” on the police force? What are our legal options? What are our civil options?**

Driving while black:

DWB is real. DWB may not be the reason you were pulled over but it speaks to the reason you may be more afraid when pulled over as a black person. There are some things everyone should know about their personal civil rights and there are some things we should know about behavior

when you feel those rights are being violated. Below is a list of some valuable things to know when operating under the law.

Know your rights

The spirit of the 4th Amendment

Remember to ask questions. It is your right to speak up for yourself and ask questions the officer is required to answer. This helps you be able to avoid assuming and unneeded anger. It also helps to remove doubt and the possibility for lies to arise.

Probably Cause = what the officer actually saw or heard that led to suspicion of criminal activity

Reasonable suspicion = what the officer thinks is questionable behavior linked to a possible crime.

Reasonable suspicion unfortunately is shaped many times by stereotypes because if something looks similar to what has happened in another crime than it appears suspicious to the officer. This is why you must be careful as to who you are with and how you are behaving to avoid any suspicion to onlookers.

Know if you are being searched by asking the officer “Are you searching me?” or “Are you looking for something”? The officer should be able to tell you if you are being searched and

ultimately what they suspect they will find. You have a right to privacy that protects from being searched without an officer having probable cause.

Police Seizure = personal or property

When an officer touches you or makes you feel as though you are not free to leave, this is a seizure. An officer just speaking with you is not the same as a seizure.

The spirit of the 5th Amendment

No coercion should take place when that leads to you incriminating yourself. You don't have to talk or answer questions.

Role Play:

Now let's put all this knowledge to the test and ask each other questions about these terms and rules. Do a role play and run through various scenarios to see how you should best react on either side.

#knowyourrights (<http://knowyourrightscamp.com>)

This is a camp that gives some excellent advice and tips to remember.

Manage your behavior

Operation: make it home – how to behave

Stay calm

Move slowly

Answer with wisdom & respect

Remember you will have your chance

Trust in God

De-escalation scenario

The police officers should come up with at least two scenarios that role play how they would de-escalate a situation during a traffic violation, and confronting a possible suspect in a crime.

Comply Scenario

The young men should come up with at least two scenarios that role play how they would comply in a traffic stop, and when suspected in a crime.

Activity:

In the Zone: Students are paired off with an officer. The student plays the officer responding to a domestic violence call and the officer plays the suspected perpetrator. The activity will help show another perspective and also allow for discussion on what should have happened or should not have happened.

Conclusion:

Let's end with a discussion about Community Policing.

How valuable was this model to help understand community policing?

What does this look like?

How will we make this a reality?

What now? Where do we go from here?

Activity:

The Puzzle Challenge: Two – four groups are formed. Officers and students are separate. Each is given a small puzzle to

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EDUCATION

2014-2019	DMin in Urban Ministry from Andrews University Theological Seminary, Berrien Springs, MI
2009-2011	MDiv from Andrews University Theological Seminary, Berrien Springs, MI
2003-2007	Oakwood University, Huntsville, AL BA in Religion (Minor in Biblical Studies) BBA in Management
1999-2003	High school diploma from Central Valley Christian Academy (formerly Modesto Adventist Academy, Modesto, CA)

ORDINATION

2012	Ordained by and currently hold ministerial credentials from South Atlantic Conference of Seventh-day Adventists.
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CAREER

2017	Senior Pastor of Emanuel SDA Church (Albany, GA) and Calvary SDA Church (Blakely, GA)
2011-2017	Senior Pastor of the Mount Olive SDA Church (Marion, SC) and the New Life SDA Church (Lake City, SC)
2007-2009	Senior Pastor of the Berean SDA Church (Lillington, NC) and the Bethel SDA Church (Clinton, NC)
2003-2007	Literature Evangelism for Oakwood University (AL/TN)

PRESENTATIONS

- 2018 Guest Lecturer for “Counseling Diverse Populations” class at Fort Valley State University.
- Seminar Speaker for the Southern Union Ministerial Conference in Orlando, FL.
- Guest presenter for the Urban Mission and Ministry Congress in Berrien Springs, MI.
- 2016 Speaker for 1st Annual Adventists For Social Justice Summit in Washington, DC.

PUBLICATIONS

- 2018 Nelson, J. (2018) *In the Trenches: 10 reasons to stay in ministry*. Olive Branch, MS: Watersprings Media House, LLC.
- 2016 Nelson, J (2016, August 2) A Sabbath for unity: 7 steps to cross-cultural collaboration. *The Compass Magazine*, retrieved from <https://thecompassmagazine.com/blog/a-sabbath-for-unity>

